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From a Photograph

THOMAS WORTHINGTON, OF WYTHENSHAW.



THOMAS WORTHINGTON, OF NORTHENDEN.

By JOHN MORTIMER.

THE announcement that on Sunday, the twenty-sixth of February last, Thomas Worthington, of Northenden, had passed away at his residence, Cleveland Lodge, in his sixty-seventh year, would remind some of the senior members of the Manchester Literary Club that the bearer of that name was once a familiar figure in their midst, especially in the old "Mitre" days. The records of the Club are contained in many volumes, but the only reference to him as a participator in its proceedings is to be found under a date in 1878, when a paper was read by Mr. Eli Sowerbutts descriptive of Lincolnshire. To the summary of that contribution in the report these words are appended:—"In the conversation which followed Mr. Thomas Worthington (Wythenshawe) gave some interesting particulars concerning the Lincolnshire breed of sheep and the fine agricultural characteristics of the county." This solitary reference is in itself characteristic of our departed friend, but it is by no means exhaustive or representative of his influence among us. We knew him as Thomas Worthington, of Wythenshawe, land steward to the Squire, and dwelling at "The Mount" there, a sturdy, yeoman-like son of the soil, who brought with him into our Club-room atmosphere a fine, breezy, country flavour, which was eminently refreshing. Without any literary pretensions on his own part, save as regarded

the love of books, he liked the society of literary men, and was a great conversationalist when that form of communication occupied a considerable space in the Club's recreations. His talk was not "of bullocks" only, but took a wider range. He was an ardent lover of nature, who, on occasion, would bring with him "wildings from the woods," and discourse about them with affectionate intelligence, and who vied with "our birdmaster," John Page, in ornithological lore. His membership lasted about fourteen years; then he withdrew, leaving pleasant memories behind him, and thereafter was known more intimately by some of us in that Cheshire homestead where a great part of his strenuous life was passed.

"The Mount" stands at a parting of the ways, opposite one of the lodge gates of Wythenshawe Park, whose bordering plantations stretch widely on either side, giving the roadway there a woodland aspect. "The Mount" has its own bordering timber, with a rustic seat hospitably placed under a sheltering tree, where the tired wayfarer may find rest or shade. I have often thought that "The Mount," if she had seen it, would have attracted George Eliot's eye, with its old ivy-covered house, withdrawn from the road across an intervening space of smooth-turfed, inward-curving lawn, its fair fine gardens, floral and vegetable, its orchard spaces, and its shrubberies, familiarly blending, in an unfenced way, with the outbuildings and the spacious woodyard, with fallen timber lying about it. The house in its interior was bright and home-like, with dwelling-rooms, and offices devoted to farm and estate purposes, opening out to right or left. Within and without it gave to the town-dweller the impression of a home—

With all things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

If on some holiday or time of convenient leisure in spring, summer or autumn you had passed through the wicket gate of the garden, to find yourself in company with the occupier, you would not have been slow to discover how markedly the sweet environment bore the impress of his personality. Apart from certain permanent features, he had in a sense made it all. If ever a man loved nature Thomas Worthington did, and to live in close relationship with it was a necessary condition of his existence. You could not call his garden "careless-ordered," and yet there was an absence throughout of constrained, prim formality or anything artificial. It was without affectation, homely, and adorned for the most part with flowers which are usually described as old-fashioned. He possessed a wide botanical knowledge, but he was not a botanist merely, but rather one who loved plants and flowers for their own sakes. He would pass them in review, calling them all by their names, but in his talk about them you had the consciousness of an under-current of very tender regard. The daffodil was one of his favourites, and in springtime you would see a broad space bright with the gold of them, choice of their kind, but single in form; I don't remember to have seen any double ones in his garden, for he had an objection to cultivations of that kind, and would, I believe, have had all roses retain their primitive forms, which perhaps accounted for the fondness he displayed for the Rose of Sharon. I have said that there was nothing artificial in his gardening, but an exception might be made in view of a piece of rockwork constructed in a favoured corner, near the rose-entwined doorway, for the special reception and nurture of rare ferns and Alpine plants, about which he would linger long, discoursing about them with an affectionate familiarity, as of children in a nursery.

Above these, lifting itself loftily on a wall-ledge, was a fine yucca, whose flowering was a much-looked-for and important event in the calendar. As a horticulturist he devoted special attention to the growth and nurture of fruit trees, and of choice to those of the apple kind, adopting methods of his own in wonderfully successful ways; so would he in the autumn time, when the season had been favourable, point with pride to the goodly-sized fruit with which their boughs were laden. If, sitting with him under the trees that bordered his smooth-turfed lawn—on some summer afternoon when the bees were murmuring overhead in the limes—the talk should turn upon the country life outside his garden, the listener would not be slow to discover what a comprehensive knowledge of agriculture he possessed, and of woodcraft, and the life of the fields generally, conveyed with many shrewd observations on men and things, and accompanied often with a wise smile that

Seem'd half-within and half-without,
And full of dealings with the world.

He had a decided turn for folk-lore and local topography, was learned in his disquisitions on the origins of place-names, and knew the history of his own neighbourhood thoroughly, one of his pet projects being the writing of a chronicle of it, by some sympathetic scribe, under his own personal guidance and supervision. Among the fields, with farmhouses scattered picturesquely about them, lying within the estate with which he was associated, are many pleasance paths and shy retreats, where the present writer has often loitered. Regarding these he had much to tell that was peculiarly interesting, to one listener at least, who liked to hear him talk, among other things, about Sleepy Hollow, the moated grange, the old hall on

the upland slope, or the green, deserted lane with the ghost-haunted pool in it. He knew the flora of the district intimately, and could tell you where it was best to seek for early white violets, cowslips and primroses.

He was cast in a strong mould, and in his strength he went about

Rejoicing in the joy
Of beautiful, and well-created things;

but rheumatism got hold of him and wrecked him so far physically that there was no more movement for him about his garden save in a wheeled chair, but his outlook on nature and life seemed to suffer little change. Then, too, there came a time, some years ago, when he had to resign his stewardship and exchange the old house he loved so well for another not far away, where he ended his days. Here, too, he had a fair garden, and it was in the green-house there that I last sat with him and heard him talk in his old buoyant, informing way, with the tall, full-flowering fuschias drooping about him and the air sweet with the scent of heliotrope.





THE LOVE STORY OF SAINT BERTRAM.

By GEORGE MILNER.

SAINTE BERTRAM, though one of the most dim and legendary in the long roll of English Saints, had evidently an intimate connection with that Church of the Holy Cross which stands—a grey relic of antiquity, modest but beautiful—in front of the modern and more imposing Ilam Hall. In the Church there is a great slab, six feet six inches long, and two feet six inches wide, which covers the remains of the Saint; and above it is a shrine or hollow altar-tomb of later date pierced by quatrefoils at the sides and ends. These apertures are curiously worn, and it is suggested that pilgrims in great numbers crept through them in order that they might prostrate themselves on the broad stone which lay more immediately above the actual remains of the Saint. In the Church also there is a Font of great antiquity, on which there are, sculptured in a rude and yet intelligible manner, certain figures which are said to represent the central incident in the Legend of Saint Bertram. In the churchyard are two monolith crosses whose great age is indicated by the use of the peculiar decoration known as “basket-work.”

These may or may not have been connected with Bertram, but in the grounds of the Hall, a few minutes' walk from the Church, and standing between the river and

the rising woodland, is a huge monolith, with signs of sculpture still showing, which has always been known as "Bertram's Pillar," and which probably marks the site of his Hermitage. On the prominent hill called Bunster, which encloses the "Happy Valley" on the side nearest to Dovedale, there are still to be seen Saint Bertram's Well, and an ash tree of a peculiar kind known as "Saint Bertram's Ash."

Although he must have been a person of considerable reputation the record of him which may be gleaned from the various "Lives of the Saints" is singularly scanty and confused. He probably lived in the latter part of the Seventh Century and was a disciple of the famous Guthlac, who belonged to the royal house of Mercia, but who fled from the turbulent world to a holy retirement at Crowland or Croyland, and over whose tomb there arose a stately Abbey in but a few years after his death.

Bertram is probably identical with a Saint who is connected with Peakland, and variously known as Bartellin, Bettelin and Beccelin. He was the son of a Prince or King of Stafford, then known as Bethney or Bethnei. Tradition speaks of him as a youth beautiful in person, and accomplished alike in the arts of war and peace. Wearied, however, with the course of his life at his father's court he departed secretly, and entered upon a life of adventure. Wandering alone westward he took ship at Chester for Ireland. It may be that the fame of the Irish Saints led him thither and that their teaching laid the foundation for the future sanctity of his life; but as so often happens in the old romances—and in the new ones too—Love stepped in and claimed pre-eminence. For many months he journeyed among the desolate hills and shadowy loughs of Ireland, and coming at last, at nightfall, upon a grey and many-turretted castle, half hidden among

rocks and foliage, and standing at the head of a wild gorge leading down to the sea, he alighted from his horse, and begged hospitality. The beauty of his person and his courtly manners secured him a welcome. He found the tenants of the stronghold were an aged Chieftain with his young daughter and three brothers. As the winter was approaching they prevailed upon him to remain with them for awhile and share in their days of hunting and fishing, and their nights of song and story. Ere long he felt that a tender feeling was growing up between himself and Eileen, the daughter. When their eyes met they each trembled and turned aside, love and fear fighting for the mastery.

He tried to tear himself away, but their persuasion—unsuspicious of the truth—and the tyranny of his own passion were too strong for him. Without a word spoken each became aware that true love had, by each, been given and taken. And so, in this wise, interpreting the uncouth sculptured legend on the font in Ilam Church, the old story may be told.

When Bertram spoke of marriage, sitting with the Princess—for so they called her—in a dim corner of the great hall when twilight was falling over the glen, Eileen's eyes filled with tears and her fingers trembled among the strings of a rude viol which she had been playing to conceal the import of their speech. "My father," she whispered, "will never consent, now that my mother is dead, that I should leave the Castle so long as he lives, and if my brothers knew that you wished to take me away they would rise up—the three of them together—and kill you; and then my heart would be broken." So after that they waited, now having great joy in each other's company, and now being overwhelmed with sorrow; but both the gladness and the weeping must needs be hidden from those about

them. Sometimes in the twilight hours she would sing for her lover so softly that she could not be heard by the others, and then Bertram would take the viol and sing in return with some such simple snatches of song as this:—

Sing low, my queen.
In whispered words that are half silences,
My sweet Eileen,
Sing low,
Thine eyes will tell me what mine ear may miss,
And all a lover needs to know;
Sing low.
Eileen.

Only one grey, old nurse knew of their secret, and to her little bower Eileen would run when grief overcame her, and, clinging round the old woman's neck, would let her tears run freely, and try to still the beating of her heart.

But when the first signs of spring were seen in the greening woods, and St. Patrick's trefoil with its white and lilac chalice began to bloom, and the streams flashed in sunlight as they went leaping down to the sea, the great desire of their hearts rose up and would not be quieted.

So, having resolved upon flight, they confided their intention to the nurse, and, with her carefully concealed assistance, left the Castle at midnight. They did not take to the woods—through which there were many paths—being sure that in that direction they would be followed, but ran down the untrodden glen by the side of the stream, and so on to the rocky shore. There they knew they would find an old black curragh used in the fishing. In this frail boat they put out to sea. At no great distance there lay a small island densely covered with the silver birch, and in the summer time, with a great undergrowth of the royal fern, whose stems would rise to a height of eight or ten feet. Here they thought they might safely hide till the

search for them was over. Although the night had seemed calm on the land—so still, indeed, that every slightest sound reached their ears and terrified them—on the sea there was a rising wind. Bertram knew how to manage the uncertain and dangerous curragh, but he could not keep the waves from sometimes sweeping over them. Large and black in the gloom of the night they rose around, leaping like monstrous things one over the other as though they were ravening for their prey. And, worse still, far off in front of them they reared up out of the darkness like sheeted ghosts with beckoning hands and white hair that streamed in the blast. Eileen was brave enough and had often joined in the perils of the chase with her brothers, but she was easily overcome by supernatural terrors, and with a piercing shriek she threw herself upon Bertram and besought him to return.

Knowing that there was real danger and that the curragh could not be depended upon in such a sea as was running before them, he pulled back for the land, but wide of the glen's mouth. When, with much difficulty he had got Eileen, faint and helpless, safely ashore, they were startled by a low whine coming from among the rocks. It was Eileen's faithful hound which had discovered their departure and tracked their footsteps. In vain they sought to drive him back, but then recognising that he would surely follow them again, and lead to their capture, they allowed him to accompany them, and not without pleasure at the thought of his companionship. Leaving the curragh to float out to sea they hastily began their journey, for already the faint light of dawn began to show over the mountain tops.

For many weary days they pursued the meandering line of the lonely coast, walking by night and hiding in the caves when daylight warned them to desist.

At length they reached a point where the inaccessible cliffs fell away and disclosed a fertile valley running inland. Here, as Bertram knew there stood a noble Abbey—for he had rested there in his wandering,—and on the shore a little chapel and a hermitage, where an aged brother from the Abbey dwelt alone, saying mass daily and offering prayers at midnight, at cockcrow, and at nightfall, for those in danger on the sea. To this old man Bertram told his piteous story of peril and hardship, and both he and Eileen with prayers and tears besought him to give them marriage after the Irish ritual; and this he did, the holy Abbot consenting.

Here they remained for a long time, nourishing their hearts with love most tenderly, and forecasting the happiness in store for them, with great peace and joy. They did not venture far from the Hermitage, so that they might quickly hide themselves if any approached.

Then when it began to go about the country that the English prince, Eileen, and the faithful dog were all drowned, the curragh having been found broken and overturned far out to sea, Bertram was emboldened, and having a great longing to take his beautiful dark-haired Princess to his father's court, they went forth, stealthily at first, and made for the nearest port, taking ship from thence to Chester. At Chester they got themselves horses and rode straight to the South-east towards Bethnei.

Now the country through which they had to pass was at that time a vast, waste wilderness, in which were many quaking bogs and shaggy woods, with few paths and fewer roads. Also there were broad rivers unbridged, which must needs be forded. So they went warily, finding such rest and food as they could in forest-lodges and miners' huts, but keeping clear of castles and great houses, for

there was much strife among the under-lords of the country, and no man knew whether he should come suddenly upon his enemy or his friend. Yet they were ever joyful because of their great love, and sang on their way as merrily as the little birds in the bushes. And so it chanced that on one day, as it fell towards evening, they found themselves in a narrow glade, very green and beautiful to go upon, with sunlight streaming in at the farther end, but at each side were gloomy woods entangled and impenetrable. And while they rode, gently enough, Eileen cried out in sudden pain and swerved upon her horse, so that Bertram had much ado to save her from falling, and the hound also leaped up to her saddle as if he too would have helped to save his dear mistress. Then Bertram looking into her face saw that it was white with anguish, and she whispered into his ear that her time was come, and that he must lift her down from the horse. So he laid her tenderly upon the sward, and made a bed of leaves and rushes, and set her upon it with her head pillowed against the mossy bole of a great elm, and wound his riding cloak about her feet. Then he rode back in great haste (having kissed her on the mouth before he mounted), hoping that he would find some poor woman to help them in their calamity.

And as he turned to cast a smile to his dear love he saw the hound following him, and at first he would have sent him back, but afterward he said to himself, "Nay, but surely the good dog will scent a human habitation sooner than I," for there was none such to be seen, nor had been for many a mile. And so it was, for the hound suddenly broke through a dense thicket, and Bertram following on foot, they came upon a little hollow, and by a stream a rude hut of logs and turf in which dwelt a lone woman, old, ill-favoured, and shrewd of tongue, but with a

quick wit showing in her eyes. And when she heard Bertram's story and his promise of reward she followed him swiftly into the green glade; and there he took her up and set her on his horse behind him, and they made great speed, for Bertram's heart yearned towards his love in her sore strait. And as they ran they heard a dreadful howling in the wood on their left-hand, and at this time the hound sprang into the air and went forward as an arrow would fly from the bow, and Bertram's spirit sank within him for he feared some terrible mischance. Then they heard the hound baying in a doleful fashion, and when they came to the place where the bed was made under the mossy elm, they saw nothing but a great pool of blood; and a mist swam before Bertram's eyes so that he stumbled in coming down from his horse and fell to the ground, and lay there upon his face moaning piteously and clawing the earth with his fingers. But when he heard the hound baying again, he started to his feet and followed the sound. And when he entered the thickest part of the wood—Ah, woeful sight!—he came upon the dismembered relics of his dear Eileen and her new-born babe, and saw in front of him a great pack of wolves, who, leaving their first prey had turned upon Eileen's horse, which was a white palfrey. Then Bertram, mad with grief and rage, caught up from the ground a huge fallen branch of oak and dealt such fierce blows upon the wolves that they let go the wounded palfrey and fled, but some of them were overtaken and made an end of, being either brained by the furious strokes of Bertram's club, or taken at the throat by the hound.

And now was Bertram's grief greater than ever, as he walked back slowly through the dark wood with his eyes upon the ground, leading the palfrey, and the hound following, to the place of dreadful carnage. Then, as the dusk was coming on, he bade the woman hasten to her hut

and bring what she could find for cere-cloths, and also some strong man to help in digging a seemly grave. And she answered that she had store of linen in a press which was intended for her own burial, and she would fetch some of that; and as for a grave-digger, there was her brother who lived hard by. He was a dwarf but stronger in the arms than any two men and would make a beautiful grave.

Then Bertram told her to begone quickly while there was yet some daylight. And in a short space of time she returned with many fair sheets and napkins of fine linen; and with her came the dwarf, huge and misshapen, but standing no higher than to Bertram's thigh, and with a face blackened by the smoke of burning wood, and dark hair which hung in elfish coils about his mouth and down to his neck.

Then Bertram bade the woman gather reverently together the poor remains and fold them in one fair sheet, that mother and child might not be divided, and lay with them some sweet herbs which grew near in the wood. In the meantime he and the dwarf dug a grave both wide and deep beneath the great elm where Eileen had been first laid down, and Bertram descended into the grave and laid a green bough at the bottom and bestowed the remains thereon, and another bough above them; and then the two men sorrowfully filled in the earth while the woman wailed some wild dirge of the country side.

Then, it being by this time quite dark, Bertram sent the dwarf and his sister away to their homes, but he himself, he said, would watch by the grave all night, lest the wolves should return; and having tied the palfrey to a tree and washed its wounds with water, he sat down for his sad vigil with the hound by his side. Once in the moonlight he saw the head of a wolf, with glaring eyes, protrude from the blackness of the forest, and knew that there were others

behind it, but when the hound bayed he heard them retreat with a crashing noise, and saw them no more.

The next morning at the first break of dawn the woman returned, and with other helpers they procured a broad and heavy slab of stone, and set it upon the grave, and put round it a strong fence of stakes, wattled as if for the building of a house; and during many days Bertram had made—and chiefly with his own hands—a great Cross of wood, more than ten feet high, and set it firmly at the head of the grave, so that it could not be moved. And on the Cross he carved rude symbols of the Christian Faith; and this he did not only to show that she who lay beneath was a follower of the Cross, but also as a protest against the heathen worship which still lingered in the land.

And when all was finished he had an inscription put upon the Cross which in our modern tongue would run thus:—

This is the Grave
of
Eileen of Ireland,
And her new-born Babe
Who were cruelly done to death by Wolves.

In memory of my Wife and child
I Bertram of Bethnei
Have set up this Cross,
And am now by Holy Vows
God's Servant for ever.

And when Bertram had mourned for his wife many days, he set forth again on his journey to Bethnei, riding upon his own horse, leading the palfrey by his side, and the faithful hound following. And when he came to his father's court his kindred received him with great joy as one brought from the dead; but when they saw that he

was wearing the habit of an Anchorite—for he had already put on that apparel—they wondered greatly. And after he had told them his sorrowful story their grief was as great as their joy had been before.

Then when he begged them to lead him to his father they were silent fearing to increase the weight of his singular affliction; but, he suspecting that they were holding back some evil tidings, cried out that he might be told all, whether it might be for weal or for woe. Then an aged man, the Chancellor of the Court, bowed his head, and with many hesitating words, made known to him that the King his father was dead, having been slain, at the very moment of victory, in a great battle with the Heathen, and that the people when they knew of his safe return would most surely acclaim him as their future King. But Bertram answered: "It cannot be, I am dedicated and set apart by many solemn vows to a religious and solitary life. I have left the world behind me, and no earthly power can lead me back. Let my younger brother reign in my stead, and God be with him."

.

Then when Bertram had mourned for his father seven days, he set out at night so that the people might not importune him to be their King, and taking with him only the palfrey and the hound for his dear wife's sake, he passed unseen into the secluded and mountainous region of Peakland; and in a wooded valley where two crystal rivers break out of the solid ground he made himself a Hermitage, and there with no companions but the horse and the hound (so long as they lived), and the birds and all timid forest creatures who fed upon the crumbs which fell from his scanty board, he kept his solitude until men knew not how old he was. And when at last he died they

laid him in a quiet burial place beside the river, where there was, as yet, no church but only a Friar's Preaching Cross. But afterwards, when his great sanctity and the sad story of his life became known, they built a church round his grave; and in later years they put a shrine above the grave, to which many pilgrims came. And they called the Church "The Church of the Holy Cross," because Saint Bertram died on "Holy Cross Day," the 9th of September.

.

And still the two pellucid rivers rise from the earth as they did in Bertram's day; and still the old grey Church covers his grave and his shrine and the Font, which in rudest outline seems to shadow forth some such story of human sorrow and religious devotion as that which we have endeavoured to embody in these pages.





RICHARD CRASHAW.

By WILLIAM C. HALL.

Poet and Saint! to thee alone are given
The two most sacred names of earth and heaven,
The hard and rarest union which can be
Next that of godhead with humanity.
Long did the Muses banisht slaves abide,
And built vain pyramids to mortal pride;
Like Moses, thou (though spells and charms withstand),
Hast brought them nobly home back to their Holy Land . . .
Thy spotless Muse, like Mary, did contain
The boundless godhead; she did well disdain
That her eternal verse employed should be
On a less subject than eternity . . .
How well (blest Swan) did Fate contrive thy death,
And made thee render up thy tuneful breath
In thy great Mistress' Arms! Thou most divine
And richest offering of Loretto's shrine.
Where, like some holy sacrifice t' expire,
A fever burns thee, and Love lights the fire.
Angels (they say) brought the famed chapel there,
And bore the sacred load in triumph through the air;
'Tis surer much they brought thee there; and they,
And thou, their charge, went singing all the way.
Pardon, my Mother-Church, if I consent
That Angels lead him when from thee he went;
For even in error, sure no danger is,
When joined with so much piety as his . . .
His Faith, perhaps, in some nice tenets might
Be wrong, his life, I'm sure, was in the right . . .

Hail, Bard triumphant, and some care bestow
 On us, the Poets militant below . . .
 I ask but half thy mighty spirit for me:
 And when my Muse soars with so strong a wing,
 'Twill learn of things divine, and first of thee to sing.

I EXTRACT so much from Cowley's lines "On the Death of Mr. Crashaw" because they form one of the finest and most eloquent laudatory poems in our literature, and are a eulogy most sincerely uttered and most distinctly merited. Were I treating of Cowley himself, I should have to refer to them, and perhaps with some detail to describe them, as indicating the height on the mount to which he might have attained, had he given his soul of fancy a lighter freight of words and a more incumbent burden of passion. But here there is passion enough. It is measured as it issues from the heart, tenuous for its intensity, and—to fall from a figure—beautiful for its pain. What more shall be said than that this is the threnody of a friend? But, over and above the dirge of friendship mourning, there is the lyric, the light suggestiveness that leads us back to life, to the man, the singer and the saint.

We live in times of multitudinous revivals, religious, political, literary, and it is a matter of delight to many that our renascence of literature touches the seventeenth century, and calls from their neglected nests the singing-birds of a fretful period, who had songs in spite of the weather. We have begun to turn to them with interest and expectancy; and so far we have not encountered disappointment. In distinction from their mannerisms, whims, artificialities, their jests and jousts of verse, we have discovered gold in their ore; but much remains. There are songs yet to hear and singing yet to reverence.

Of those poets who have lain buried these many generations, wrapt in the mantle of the world's neglect,

surely Richard Crashaw is one. Surely; but this is the thesis I have to defend. I note, however, that by cultured Catholics he has been steadily held in affection; but the larger world is Protestant, even tyrannically so, and it is only now that he is again coming to his own, the poet's own, which is something, a realm, far removed from the prejudices of traditional creeds and the ironies of religious predilections. We have no choice in the aftertime; the poet persists, because he is soul, and not merely voice. But I want here to recognise three facts which deserve, or will deserve, mention in what I believe is the gathering appreciation of Crashaw—(1) the labours of Dr. Grosart, not as his critic or interpreter, but as his editor; (2) the work of Mr. J. R. Tutin, which has never yet had its proper word of praise; and (3) the recent edition issued from the Cambridge Press—in humorous vein I may say, like another treatise on the Hexateuch; or like, to the dry, clear palate of the bibliophile, the delectable, sharp caviare of a first edition. These have been, and will be, influential in the cultivation of our regard for one who “flames to heaven . . . divine in music and in passion,” and throws across our path more than a feeble and transient flash of light.

Richard Crashaw, the only child of the Rev. William Crashaw, B.D., by his first wife, was born in London in or about the year 1613. His father was a Puritan of uncompromising opinions and vigorous, if not violent, convictions; a circumstance which requires to be kept steadily in view as the brief details of his life are considered. Although he was only about thirteen years old when his father died, and we have no biographical record of him to this time of any consequence, sufficient may be gathered from the account which Dr. Grosart has furnished of his father to lead us to a first understanding

of his revolt from Protestantism—a remark here made which may save us from a long discussion later. His primary education was received at Charterhouse, which he entered on the nomination of Sir Henry Yelverton and Sir Randolph Crewe. To Robert Brook, a master there, he makes complimentary references in his early Latin poems, liberally acknowledging the obligations in which he felt himself bound. On July 6th, 1631, he was admitted to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, and was elected a scholar on March 26th of the following year. Here he rapidly attained to proficiency in the classical languages, a partial proof of which we have in the fact, according to Mr. Gosse, that his first public appearance was made in a little Latin anthology prepared in 1632 to congratulate Charles I. on the preservation of his health. His fondness for music and drawing has been noted. I have found no evidence of the direction which his love of music took; but specimens of his draughtsmanship left to us are, I think, remarkable for their conception, scheme, definiteness of portrayal, and decisive details; and those which are not simply quaint are wonderfully mature. But more evident than his academic and general distinctions was his pious life at the University. We read in the Preface to *Steps to the Temple* that “in the Temple of God, under his wing, he led his life, in St. Maries Church neere St. Peters Colledge; there he lodged under Tertullian’s roofo of Angels; there he made his nest more gladly than David’s Swallow neere the house of God, where, like a primitive Saint, he offered more prayers in the night than others usually offer in the day.” In November, 1636, he migrated to Peterhouse, of which College he was elected a Fellow in the following year, and in 1638 took the degree of M.A. Among his University friends were William Herryss and Robert Brook, whom he made the subjects of epitaphs; James Staninough, for

whose memory he produced an elegy; Joseph Beaumont, the author of the enormous poem entitled *Psyche*, with whom he discussed his poetical projects; and Abraham Cowley. But probably more influential than these friendships, certainly for the development of his religious temper, was his intimacy with Nicholas Ferrar, whose community at Little Gidding, known as the "Protestant nunnery," he frequently visited. To Ferrar we are indebted for much, probably more than we have yet recognised, of what has come to us from George Herbert, and our debt in the case of Crashaw is certainly co-extensive; speaking generally, and apart, an interesting estimate might be attempted on what literature and practical piety owe to the settlement at Little Gidding and its founder. The inference is practically certain that his associations with Ferrar and his friends had much to do with his entering Holy Orders, and with his book, the title, if not the contents of it, *Steps to the Temple*. His life for seven years, 1636 to 1643, while he is noted as a powerful preacher in the University, of which Peterhouse at this time was the centre of High Church doctrine, would seem to have been tolerably equable. But in the Civil War the chapel of Peterhouse was sacked on December 21st, 1643, and the Parliamentary Commissioners insisted that the Fellows should bind themselves to the Solemn League and Covenant. Crashaw and five others declined, and were ejected from their foundations. That those whose cause, on its religious side at least, his father had vehemently espoused should thus have maltreated him must, apart from his more sensuously religious inclinations, have acted as a factor and powerful determinant in his secession from Protestantism. Consider with this circumstance the two spiritual conditions which Dr. Grosart emphasises—(a) his recluse, shy, meditative life "under Tertullian's

roofs of angels;" and (b) his passionately sympathetic reading, as of Teresa, and going forth of his most spiritual yearnings after the "sweet and subtle pain" and Love's death "mystical and high;" and we have, I think, an almost circumspect and complete explanation of his accession—in his case one cannot call it a conversion—to Catholicism. To his patroness, Susan Fielding, Countess of Denbigh, to whom he "most humbly presented" his *Carmen Deo Nostro*, he addressed letters urging her to take a like course. He retired to France, where, in Paris, in 1646, he was found by his friend Cowley, destitute. Queen Henrietta Maria was then an exile in that city. To her Cowley introduced him; and she, in her turn, introduced him to Cardinal Palotta. He became an attendant or secretary to Palotta, at what time we do not know, unless we are to form a judgment on the fact that he migrated to Italy in 1648 or 1649. In this capacity he seems to have served with—for his environment—exceptional integrity. He denounced to his master the irregularities and loose manners of certain ecclesiastics, and brought upon himself their malevolence; suspicion, which hints at his death by poison, would say also their maleficence. On April 24th, 1649, he was admitted a beneficiary or sub-canon of the Basilica Church of Our Lady of Loretto. The rest is a brief tale of suffering. He died on August 25th of the same year.

It is necessary to ask, before proceeding to an appreciation and criticism of his literary work, to what extent is knowledge of the details of his life requisite for the adequate interpretation of his poems; for in his case you must get at the spirit of the man—the rule, I know, is general, but here it must be confirmed—or you cannot rightly feel the intensity of his more passionate pieces, pieces which, if their quality had been transmitted to the

rest, would have established him with an enduring reputation as one of the greatest of English poets. I do not know whether in our estimate of any man we can dispense with a single element of biography. In human life there is probably no such thing as a secondary cause; and modern logic, making its splendid cycles, says that S is not P, but only S, and that the cause of the universe, and everything it comprises, is the universe itself. We are reduced and contracted to a point. But we stare from our nonentity to a broad world, and discover a thousand things in isolation. And we are bound to be eclectic, perhaps capriciously so, where we would withdraw our minds from universal abstractions and understand a few plain facts. Now, what we should call the external incidents of Crashaw's life only very lightly bear upon his poetical work, which, in his judgment, was a mere incident, an unconscious efflux and not a deliberate element. His poems were, in the words of his first editor, "exercises of his curious invention and sudden fancy, subservient recreations for vacant hours, not the grand business of his soul." The fact we have to seize upon is direct and immediate, his temperament, particularly as it is pious, sensitive to the most delicate sensuousness of religious imagery, smoothly wrought for the fine delineation of spiritual impression. His Catholicism was that of one who prays not simply before the image, but in the presence, of his favourite saint, and sees, as in the flesh, the pitying Mother of God, who will intercede with the mute eloquence of her tears. It is difficult for those of us who are Protestants, impervious to the appeal which ritual makes successfully to others, to lend a proper sympathy, not merely to its externals, but to the spirit which catches at and embraces its suggestiveness. We must be under Tertullian's roof with Crashaw as he pours

his prayers into the night, and before visible altars kneels not far from the invisible throne; we must approximate to his devotion, before we can assimilate his song—simply because his singing is, as I have said, an incidental. And more, we must summon our imagination to carry us back into the centuries when devotion, of whatever kind, was sad for persecution; when all religion was in a strange land, by Babylon's willowy streams; when civil strife was, as it is not now with us, the outward and imperfect mark and manifestation of the greater agony of men's souls. Let this word, somewhat echoing from my own particular rostrum, suffice to indicate the spirit of a man and the conditions under which he uttered his casual strains of pious chanting.

I turn now to the more prosaic task of analysing a poet; and it will be convenient to take the collected poems of Crashaw in the order of their publication. This will not give them to us in their chronological order—the order usually best for the consideration of an author—but it will, in spite of both obvious and apparent overlappings, furnish a clear and satisfactory method of observation. We must, however, exclude a small body of verse not incorporated in these collections, the surplus of the poems transcribed by Archbishop Sancroft. So far as it is English it is insignificant; as a whole, excepting one or two pieces, it is the least conspicuous of Crashaw's work. We would not dispense with it, unless we would set aside much of the rest, but it does not call for our regard.

Crashaw's first publication was in 1634, that of the *Epigrammatum Sacrorum Liber*, a series of Latin epigrams on Biblical incidents and topics, prefaced somewhat ornately, and supplemented with three pieces which are longer disquisitions on New Testament passages. These latter give us early evidence of the poet's ability to

turn in Latin, as in English, the uses of his vocabulary to imaginative expression, an expression which, even as it becomes fanciful and grandiloquent, never quite fails to suggest. In the epigrams themselves this quality lingers; stateliness they have not—it is not their function—but they have as well as point which marks a definite thought, the touch which leaves it still a sentiment; something hangs in the air. I am no pedant, and am but a poor scholar in these exercises of a Latinist; so, having no reputation, I may risk the assumption that these Latin epigrams are much better reading than the bulk of their counterparts in *Steps to the Temple*. One of them, “*Aquae in vinum versae*,” has had exceptional fame; several poets have rendered it into English, and would-be poets, by emulation, have endeavoured to become the actual article; and as I love these latter, in spite of all their borrowings, flagrant, but almost inevitable, I will quote the translation of one:—

Whence in your waters, say, that alien glow?
 What rose new-born your 'mazed stream hath flushed?
 Some power divine, my guests, confess, is here:
 The modest nymph hath seen her God, and blushed.

Steps to the Temple was first published in 1646. The second edition, “wherein are added divers pieces not before extant,” was issued two years later. Its preface should not be overlooked; it is an editor's morsel, to be tasted, but, like the curate's egg, which for a recent comestible has become wonderfully proverbial, it has its parts; some are excellent, others are “all right,” as we vulgarly say, the rest are not to be swallowed. And it has its measurement, although the editor does say, “The author's friend will not usurp much upon thy eye.” The excellent parts are those which tell us how these poems

were conceived under Tertullian's roof, how that they are "steps for happy souls to climb heaven by," and how the "learned reader" may "take a poem hence and tune his soul by it into a heavenly pitch, and be refined and borne up upon the wings of meditation." The "all-right" parts are those which tell us, in quaint phrase, that these poems shall lift us "some yards above the ground," and that we shall find herein "Herbert's second, but equal, who hath retrieved poetry of late;" which, further, speak of his acquisition of languages and his extensive and profound knowledge of the best Greek and Latin poets. For the rest, I cannot refrain from copying a paragraph:—

It were profane but to mention here in the Preface those under-headed Poets, retainers to seven shares and a half; madrigal fellows, whose only business in verse is to rhyme a poor sixpenny soul, a suburb sinner, into Hell. May such arrogant pretenders to Poetry vanish, with their prodigious issue of tumorous heats and flashes of their adulterate brains, and for ever after may this our Poet fill up the better room of man. Oh! when the general arraignment of Poets shall be, to give an account of their higher souls, with what a triumphant brow shall our divine Poet sit above and look down upon poor Homer, Virgil, Horace, Claudian, etc., who had amongst them the ill-luck to talk out a great part of their gallant genius upon bees, dung, frogs, and gnats, etc., and not as himself here, upon Scriptures, divine graces, martyrs and angels.

The reason for the title *Steps to the Temple* is patent; it is from the friend of Nicholas Ferrar a tribute to the memory of George Herbert. The book has for its motto the following simple couplet:—

Live, Jesus, live, and let it be
My life, to die for love of Thee.

It opens with a short poem, "The Tear," which has just those conceits that blemish work otherwise well-conceived,

an unserviceable redundancy of words, and imagery which is kaleidoscopic rather than panoramic; there is too much of the scene-shifting of the 'prentice. Nearly fifty divine epigrams follow. These presumably are translations of the Latin pieces, but the view is plausible that they may have been the originals; and to this view, in the case of several, comparison inclines me. Still, whatever be the fact, it is of no great moment. These English epigrams would seem to baffle human judgment, if we trust to any judgment but our own. Dr. George Macdonald says, and his word is affirmed by Dr. Grosart: "His divine epigrams are not the most beautiful, but they are to me the most valuable, of his verses, inasmuch as they make us see afresh the truth which he sets forth anew. In them some of the facts of our Lord's life and teaching look out upon us from clear windows of the past. As epigrams, too, they are excellent—pointed as a lance." This, I must say, is an extraordinary opinion. They have the shaft rather than the point; and they certainly are not, their religious uses apart, the productions of Crashaw's which we could least afford to ignore. On the other hand, the writer of a brilliant article in the *Retrospective Review* of 1820 tells us they are "completely worthless." Such an opinion is madness, as of one who in old-fashioned melancholy should criticise a fragment and damn a particle. They are at least as worthy as most of the pious *pensées* of that irreclaimable old sinner, Robert Herrick. They may be maudlin, but they are sincere; and sincerity is a quality which, as much as versical finish, makes for poetry. They are wearisome, tiresome, jaded things, poor cripples that still suffer, for the most part. But that is a splendid couplet in the epigram on the Pharisee and the Publican:

One nearer to God's altar trod,
The other to the altar's God.

And these lines are worth reading :—

As if the storm meant him,
Or cause heaven's face is dim

His needs a cloud;
Was ever froward wind
That could be so unkind?

Or wave so proud?

The wind had need be angry, and the water black,
That to the mighty Neptune's self dare threaten wrack.

There is no storm but this
Of your own cowardice
That braves you out;
You are the storm that mocks
Yourselves; you are the rocks
Of your own doubt:

Besides this fear of danger, there's no danger here;
And he that here fears danger, does deserve his fear.

The two paraphrases of Psalms 23 and 137 are interesting as representing a quality which saturated the very fibre of Crashaw's mind, that I would term his "verbal imaginativeness." They add phrase and figure to the original, extend the whole scheme of it, in some respects heighten it, yet never sacrifice its simple passion.

I would not pass over the couplet which opens the little poem sent to a gentlewoman, with a copy of Herbert's "Temple":—

Know you, fair, on what you look;
Divinest love lies in this book.

But other pieces I must leave unnoticed, for the sake of our attention to Crashaw's translation of the first book of *La Strage degl' Innocenti* of Giambattista Marino. This, entitled *Sospetto d'Herode*, is not literal; such was not the manner of Crashaw's translations, and we may be

thankful for the fact. It is poetical, in the full sense; and we may accept the common verdict that it transcends its original. It runs to the same number of stanzas as the Italian, but includes passages of which the latter gives hardly any indication. The best criticism I have found on this point is in the article to which reference has already been made. "The merit of Crashaw has been chiefly acknowledged as a translator, which office, in his hands, ceases to be an humble one. Such a mastery does he assume over the work before him, so richly does he clothe the ideas prepared for him, and with such apparent ease and fluency does he re-cast the sentiments in a new tongue, that he makes the poem, if not the original offspring of his own brain, yet the legitimate and thriving child of his adoption."

The magnificence of this poem—for such we may now call it—*Sospetto d'Herode*, appeals at once to the reader. It opens with the simple stanza:—

Muse, now the servant of soft loves no more,
Hate is thy theme, and Herod, whose unblest
Hand (O, what dares not jealous greatness) tore
A thousand sweet babes from their mothers' breast;
The blooms of martyrdom. O, be a door
Of language to my infant lips, ye best
Of confessors: whose throats answering his swords,
Gave forth your blood for breath, spoke souls for words.

Then it garnishes itself with habiliments that suggest the wealth of all the terror of which ancient poets sang, in a manner which does not fail to recall those splendid descriptions of evil powers Spenser and Milton have given us—arch-devilry personified, with all its attendant brood of serpents, and the licking, flashing flames of Hell. Lucifer, devil and hero, steps forth. He has lost Heaven; shall he lose Hell?

Dark, dusky man He needs would single forth,
 To make the partner of His own pure ray:
 And should we powers of Heaven, spirits of worth,
 Bow our bright heads before a king of clay?
 Is He not satisfied? Means He to wrest
 Hell from me too, and sack my territories?
 Vile human nature means He not t' invest
 (O my despite) with His divinest glories?
 And rising with rich spoils upon His breast,
 With His fair triumphs fill all future stories?
 Must the bright arms of Heaven rebuke these eyes,
 Mock me, and dazzle my dark mysteries? . . .
 Art thou not Lucifer, he to whom the droves
 Of stars that gild the morn in charge were given? . . .
 And yet whose force fear I? Have I so lost
 Myself? my strength, too, with my innocence?
 Come, try who dares, Heaven, Earth, whate'er doth boast
 A borrowed being, make thy bold defence:
 Come the Creator, too; what though it cost
 Me yet a second fall? we'd try our strengths;
 Heaven saw us struggle once: as brave a fight
 Earth now should see, and tremble at the sight. . . .

But how? He has heard of one who shall come to bless
 the earth, which for Adam's fall had been accursed, and
 save mankind from his kingdom of Hell. He has heard:

How God's Eternal Son should be man's brother . . .
 How a pure Spirit should incarnate be,
 And Life itself wear Death's frail livery.

He will call Cruelty:—

Fourth of the cursed knot of hags is she,
 Or rather all the other three in one. . . .
 Heaven saw her rise, and saw Hell in the sight.
 The field's fair eyes saw her, and saw no more,
 But shut their flowery lids, for ever Night
 And Winter strow her way; yea, such a sore
 Is she to Nature, that a general fright,
 And universal palsy spreading o'er
 The face of things, from her dire eyes had run,
 Had not her thick snakes hid them from the sun.

She goes to Herod, feaful for his realm : —

Up through the spacious palace passed she
To where the King's proudly-reposed head
(If any can be soft to tyranny
And self-tormenting sin) had a soft bed.
She thinks not fit such he her face should see,
As it is seen in Hell, and seen with dread :
To change her face's style she doth devise,
And in a pale ghost's shape to spare his eyes.

Herself a while she lays aside, and makes
Ready to personate a mortal part.
Joseph, the King's dead brother's shape, she takes ;
What he by nature was is she in art.
She comes to th' King, and with her cold hand slakes
His spirits, the sparks of life, and chills his heart,
Life's forge ; feigned is her voice, and false, too, be
Her words : " Sleep'st thou, fond man ? sleep'st thou ? " said she.
So sleeps a pilot whose poor bark is prest
With many a merciless o'ermastering wave ;
For whom (as dead) the wratful winds contest,
Which of them deepest shall dig her watery grave.
Why dost thou let thy brave soul lie supprest
In death-like slumbers, while thy dangers crave
A waking eye and hand ? Look up and see
The Fates ripe in their great conspiracy.

Know'st thou not how of th' Hebrews royal stem
(That dry old stock) a despaired branch is sprung,
A most strange babe, who here concealed by them
In a neglected stable lies, among
Beasts and base straw ? Already is the stream
Quite turned, th' ingrateful rebels this their young
Master (with voice free as the trump of fame)
Their new King, and thy successor, proclaim.

Where art thou, man ? . . . wake, wake,
And fence the hanging sword Heaven throws upon thee.

Herod wakes in rage ; " My arms ; give me my arms," he
cries. He resolves, and the poems ends.

Such lengthy extracts were necessary for the slightest
appreciation of the subtle conceptions and resonant periods

of this masterly work. It is not matter for surprise that Milton drew from it for his great epic not only words and phrases, but, I think, also much of its elemental sombreness, its shade of the underworld.

The *Delights of the Muses* is the companion of the second edition of *Steps to the Temple*. It is almost entirely different in character. Its Latin pieces are secular, and of these one only, I think, calls for notice, the beautiful version of Virgil, "In the Praise of the Spring." Of the others we get very largely the reflex in Crashaw's original verse. It contains also translations from Greek and Italian, of which the latter are the more conspicuous and important. In this volume there is a note which we do not catch elsewhere, one, moreover, which the poet would seem early to have discarded. The opening line of the first stanza of *Sospetto d'Herode*:—

Muse! now the servant of soft loves no more,

is our warrant for this opinion, and suggests that the amative verse of Crashaw was antecedent to the general body of his remaining poems. The expression "soft loves" is interesting, in view of the career which his Muse eventually undertook. For after the lyric of love, and the epic of hate, he came upon "divinest love" and hymned it, as we shall see, in all the diction and imagery of amorous human passion. This is one of the points on which it is necessary to bear in mind the influences and intimations of his religion. But we deal now with the first period.

His "Wishes, to his (Supposed) Mistress" is a classic of its kind:—

Whoe'er she be
That not impossible she
That shall command my heart and me;

Where'er she lie,
 Lock't up from mortal eye,
 In shady leaves of destiny;

Till that ripe birth
 Of studied fate stand forth
 And teach her fair steps to our earth;

Till that divine
Idca take a shrine
 Of chrystal flesh, through which to shine;

Meet you her, my wishes,
 Bespeak her to my blisses,
 And be ye called, my absent kisses.

This, of which I have given but the first five verses, is the poem by which Crashaw is best known popularly, and, if only for this circumstance, it is a pity that our present anthologies afford us only fragments of it. It has its conceits, incidental to the time, naturally; it is somewhat tedious for its over-fanciful enumerations; but it has, nevertheless, the flow of fine song and the flush of chaste passion. It should not be condensed; so to cramp it is to crush its spirit. It is not, however, to be regarded as in any way reflecting the real genius of Crashaw; this, as surely I have suggested, lay deeper than the sentiment of a madrigal. With it should be set, slightly lower, the *Song* out of the Italian, beginning:—

To thy lover,
 Dear, discover.

It has been somewhat underrated, because critics will treat lyrics as though they were epics, and the man-in-the-street regards as "tommy-rot" whatever does not scale or dip to the level of his conceptions; but it has a beautiful beat and a dainty movement.

Other pieces of this class do not call for special

comment. The least satisfactory verses of this collection are those addressed to the Queen. They are affected and grandiloquent, fulsome for overstrained compliment, like nearly all the verse of this time written in royal honour to please a majestic taste. Crashaw here is only beside his contemporaries.

We turn again to better work as we approach the lines sent, "with two greene apricockes," to Cowley, and those addressed to "Morning;" to fall back again in no little measure as we read the elegies and epitaphs on his deceased friends. I know this latter contention may not pass without some dispute, but, while I do not question the sincerity of his grief, I cannot persuade myself that Crashaw has sincerely expressed it. Grief is speechless; these pieces are voluble, almost garrulous, and freighted with a burden of conceits which are not strictly natural to the subject. Much in them is commonplace, but they have their purple patches, as this:—

I've seen indeed the hopeful bud
Of a ruddy rose that stood
Blushing, to behold the ray
Of the new-saluted day;
(His tender top not fully spread)—
The sweet dash of a shower now shed
Invited him no more to hide
Within himself the purple pride
Of his forward flower, when lo!
While he sweetly 'gan to show
His swelling glories, Auster spied him,
Cruel Auster thither hied him,
And with the rush of one rude blast
Sham'd not spitefully to waste
All his leaves, so fresh, so sweet,
And lay them trembling at his feet.

Better than these, regarding the theme, is the "Epitaph upon a Young Married Couple Dead and Buried Together," to be found in *Carmen Deo Nostro*.

The best poem in *Delights of the Muses* is indisputably "Music's Duel," and we shall not be extravagant in praise of it if we esteem it as one of the most beautiful pieces of imaginative verse in our language. Herein we see the mastery of Crashaw's genius, as point after point it surpasses our expectation. The use of speech in description is carried far beyond ordinary range; the conception is heightened at every stage of the descant; both the verse and the subject are not merely sustained, but intensified and elevated. The subject Crashaw borrowed from the volume of *Prolusiones* on rhetoric and poetry published in Cologne in the year 1617 by Famianus Strada, who was not a "Latin poet," as he has been described, but a lecturer in a Jesuit college. Others besides Crashaw have treated it, but the work with which alone it need be compared is a passage of Ford's "The Lover's Melancholy." Mr. Swinburne says: "Between the two beautiful versions of Strada's pretty fable by Ford and Crashaw there will always be a diversity of judgment among readers; some will naturally prefer the tender fluency and limpid sweetness of Ford, others the dazzling intricacy and effluence in refinements, the supple and cunning implication, the choiceness and subtlety of Crashaw." Now, Charles Lamb was among the former; but most will probably be with the latter, of whom I am one of the small brethren. I should state my judgment thus:—Both versions are excellent; Ford has done with the subject all that the medium of drama allowed; Crashaw has worked out his epic to the full; but the subject, if it did not absolutely require it, was yet best suited to epic treatment, and, therefore, we must award our chief praise to Crashaw.

In the poem we are told again the story of "the broke-heart of a nightingale o'ercome in music," to borrow lines from Herrick. It is well-nigh impossible to make extracts

from it; this would be like bringing you a patch of paint to show what a Rubens is like; it must be read, as it were, with a suspension of breath. The theme is simply this: a nightingale, hearing the strains of a "sweet lute's-master," is roused to emulation; their contest of music over the whole gamut of sound and emotion begins; the human touch and the strings triumph over the native song:—

She fails, and failing grieves, and grieving dies;
She dies: and leaves her life the victor's prize,
Falling upon his lute.

As we turn to the volume *Carmen Deo Nostro*, published in 1652, the remark may be made that, by reason of the sameness of its themes, it does not call for the somewhat specific treatment we have given to the other collections. But it demands more than these the continuous recognition of the poet's religious temperament. The reader must be kept alive to the point of view from which Crashaw regards his subject, or much of the intensity of these poems will be lost to him. It is here that his spiritual passion warms to its ethereal glow, or burns with an insatiate fever; in the one case becoming eloquent with the simplicity of a deep devotion, in the other becoming almost barbarous in wild and incoherent conceits. Here his imagery is of the finest art by reason of its artlessness and spontaneity; here also it has the blemish of abundant wax. Such a poem as "The Weeper" is hopelessly marred and defaced by the crowding of incongruous metaphors and similes, too numerous to contrast, of which the worst, possibly the worst in our literature, is the likening of the tearful eyes of St. Mary Magdalene to

Two walking baths; two weeping motions;
Portable and compendious oceans.

And the piece would be utterly ruined but for such incidental lines as these :—

Not in the evening's eyes
When they red with weeping are
For the sun that dies,
Sits sorrow with a face so fair;
Nowhere but here did ever meet
Sweetness so sad, sadness so sweet.

And these :—

The dew no more shall weep
The primrose's pale cheek to deck,
The dew no more shall sleep
Nuzzled in the lily's neck.

This strange admixture of the ungainly with the beautiful is only too common in many of the poems. But happily the more significant are free from it. "To the Name Above every Name," "The Nativity," "Charitas Nimia," "Sancta Maria Dolorum," "The Hymn to St. Teresa," and "The Flaming Heart" know it not, and, further, are free for the most part from that element of amorous languishment which, in my judgment, is not wholly decorous in sacred poetry. Says Mr. Francis Thompson, the poet of our own time who most nearly resembles Crashaw: "Here is seen one note of Crashaw, the human and lover-like tenderness which informs his sacred poems, differentiating them from the conventional style of English sacred poetry, with its solemn aloofness from celestial things." This is a note which was well worth pointing out, but there are poems in which it is too pronounced. I maintain that the following, although taken almost literally from the Canticles, magnificent in itself, and appropriate as it would be in any other

connection, is overdrawn as an invocation "in the assumption of Our Blessed Lady":—

Hark how the dear, immortal dove
Sighs to his silver mate, Rise up, my love!
Rise up, my fair, my spotless one!
The winter's past, the rain is gone;
The spring is come, the flowers appear;
No sweets, but thou, are wanting here.
Come away, my love!
Come away, my dove! Cast off delay;
The court of heaven is come
To wait upon thee home. Come, come away!
The flowers appear.

Still, I am conscious of the latitude, denied to the Protestant mind, but allowed, ay, encouraged, in the case of the Catholic: that which has no line of division between the human and the divine, and includes all passion in one. My criticism is necessarily that of another type of mind, which, I trust, can make the rightful modification of its own preconceptions before facts the inner significance of which it is naturally unable to comprehend. But it is a criticism of details only. Crashaw's devotion, that swelling tide of holy love that floods and consecrates his pages, I do not touch; it is too much above the travail of the world; it is too much within the lives of men. I would rather close his book than break into his heart.

The beautiful "Hymn to St. Teresa" was written while Crashaw was still a Protestant. St. Teresa was canonised by Gregory XV. in 1621, and this fact probably accounts for his adoration of her; it possibly led him to the reading of her life, which reading played its part in his change of faith. The central thought is in these lines:—

She'll to the Moors, and trade with them
For this unvalued diadem.
She'll offer them her dearest breath,
With Christ's name in't, in change for death.

She'll bargain with them, and will give
 Them God; teach them how to live
 In Him: or, if they deny,
 For Him she'll teach them how to die.

Coleridge said that lines 43—64, which cover this passage, were ever present to his mind whilst writing the second part of "Christabel," "if, indeed, by some subtle process of the mind, they did not suggest the first thought of the whole poem."

I must make two quotations from other poems before I close. From "Charitas Nimia," which discusses the "dear bargain" of the Cross:—

Should not the King still keep his throne
 Because some desperate fool's undone?
 Or will the world's illustrious eyes
 Weep for every worm that dies?
 Will the gallant sun
 E'er the less glorious run?
 Will he hang down his golden head,
 Or e'er the sooner seek his western bed,
 Because some foolish fly
 Grows wanton, and will die?

And from "The Nativity":—

Proud world, said I; cease your contest,
 And let the mighty babe alone.
 The phoenix builds the phoenix's nest.
 Love's architecture is his own.
 The babe whose birth embraves this morn
 Made his own bed e'er he was born.

I saw the curl'd drops, soft and slow,
 Come hovering o'er the place's head,
 Offering their whitest sheets of snow
 To furnish the fair infant's bed:
 Forbear, said I; be not so bold,
 Your fleece is white, but 'tis too cold.

I saw the obsequious seraphims
Their rosy fleece of fire bestow.
For well they now can spare their wing,
Since Heaven itself lies here below.
Well done, said I; but are you sure
Your down, so warm, will pass for pure?

No, no, your King's not yet to seek
Where to repose his royal head.
See, see, how soon his new-bloom'd cheek
'Twixt mother's breasts is gone to bed.
Sweet choice, said we, no way but so
Not to lie cold, yet sleep in snow.

We saw thee in thy balmy nest,
Bright dawn of our eternal day.
We saw thine eyes break from their east
And chase the trembling shades away.
We saw thee: and we blessed the sight;
We saw thee, by thine own sweet light.

The more important poems of this collection, those I have named, have wonderful fluency; in some passages their eloquence is torrential, in others it flows peacefully, with a smooth breast. The range of Crashaw's vocabulary is noticeable; it enables him with seeming ease to coin rich phrases, and to fall upon words until he has wrought out clearly his mental images. The verse is always carefully turned; the rhythm runs not simply in lines but in passages; the rime is always clean.

To conclude. Looking over all the poems of Crashaw, what shall we say? There are places where words rattle in their jugglery; there are passages and whole pieces in which false conceits are rampant; there are stilted poems and waste lands. But, excepting these, we have a body of verse which does not shame, but honours our literature, by representing it at its best. The pity is the unevenness. But we have to remember that Crashaw did not deliberately

set himself to sing for us—perhaps no poet does, but his breath is born of a soul that will not be repressed. But from his vacant hours we catch his melody, charged with the intensity of holier songs, inspired, after the noises of the world, with the still voices of the skies. Who shall not say, for memory of him, it was well that he did sing?

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Compiled by JOHN H. SWANN.

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THE PUNISHMENT OF LOKI.

By TINSLEY PRATT.

ARGUMENT.

After the death of Baldur, who was slain by the sprig of mistletoe cast by Hodur, at the instigation of the envious Loki, the Æsir sought out Loki. He was taken and pinioned to a rock. A serpent was suspended above him in such manner that the venom should fall on his face, drop by drop. But Siguna, his wife, stands by him and receives the drops as they fall in a cup, which she empties as often as it is filled.—*Prose Edda*.

HEXAMETERS.

FAR from the dwellers of Midgard, where loftily rising
the snow peaks
Frown o'er the desolate valleys, and rarely a bird save the
eagle
Weary of passage may linger awhile ere he cleaveth the
storm-wind,
There lies the murderer Loki bound fast by the gods of
Valhalla—
Bound to his rock as a bed while he flings forth his voice
on the tempest:
"Hear thou me, Odin, All-father! shall pity, that dwelleth
with mortals,
Lodge not in hearts of the Æsir while treading the
pathways of god-home?"

Will ye not hearken in mercy, nor heed when my cries on
the night-wind
Wail round the doors where assembled, and tended upon
by Valkyries,
Eat ye the flesh of Sehrimnir, and lustily quaff of the
mead-horns?
Hourly I measure my torments—the chill of the night in
her season,
Blasts of the god-driven hail, or the pitiless blaze of the
noonday:
Ever above me the serpent, still pouring his venom upon
me,
Knoweth no pause nor forgetteth the will of the terrible
Odin:
Years, to the children of Midgard, bring respite from toils
of the body,
Ease to the stricken of heart, and the manifold joys of
the homestead;
Wide stand the doors of Valhalla awaiting the coming of
heroes,
Led on their way by Valkyries, who serve at the footstool
of Odin;
Raw takes her tribute of ocean, and still to the region of
Hela
Troop the pale ghosts over Giall's dark stream that is
spanned by the golden
Arches, god-wrought, for the passage of shades to the
keepings of Hela—
These things the ages deny not, yet lasteth my torment for
ever;
Leaps not my spirit from slumber to greet the glad dawn
on the hill-tops,
Rings not my heart to the music that wakes in the spirit
of morning,—

Music of hedgerow and woodland—the manifold music of morning.

Still must I languish unheeded through measureless ages of torment—

Counting the years but as moments, nor looking for kindlier seasons;

Reft of the faces of children that gladden the heart of the father,

Knowing no peace of the homestead, nor sharing the joys of Valhalla?"

So in his pain crieth Loki, and spake then the bride of his sorrow:

"Weak are the hands of a woman, and frail is the flesh of Siguna;

Yet would I yield thee some comfort, O lord of my bosom aforetime!

Helpless I strive, for the Æsir with cold, inexorable faces
Look on my efforts, and render all fruitless the deeds of affection,

Stern from the lips of All-father compelling the punishment only:

Constant from sunrise to sundown, and through the dark watch of the night-tide

Sleepless I linger beside thee, while striving to shield from the venom

Ever thy tormented body, receiving the drops in my pitcher;

Little the comfort I bring thee, yet gladlier still would I render

My life for thine, and this body to suffer the wrath of the god-kind:

Years in their havoc have blighted the beauteous form of Siguna,

Hoary these locks as the woodlands that sway to the blasts
of December:

Whirlwinds have swept o'er my sorrow, yet passed they
above me unheeded,

Witless of all save thy torments, bred swift of the anger
of Odin.

Still must I bow me in sadness, for stern are the hearts of
the Æsir,

Pitiless, taking no thought of the pangs of the bitter
divorcement—

Ruthlessly tearing asunder the maid from the hand of her
lover—

Husband from wife—and the child from the breast of the
mother that bore him.

Ah, sweet babes that I nourished, shall Odin who fashioned
this torment

Never restore to my vision the dear ones borne hence by
the spoiler?—

Never, O suffering Loki! from thee lift the curse of his
hatred—

Hatred past measure of telling—the pitiless hatred of
Odin?"

Then, from the depth of his anguish, made answer the
suffering Loki:

"Weep not, ah weep not, Siguna, though dear to the heart
of the mother

Still are the babes of her body, since torn from her loving
embracement,

Never again shall her eyes behold in the dawn of their
beauty

Supple, sweet forms she has cherished, rejoicing in
strength of their boyhood—

Radiant, leaping for gladness known but to the glory of
boyhood.

Keen are the pangs of thy sorrow, whose deed brings its
punishment only:
These are the hands that, accursed, directed the footsteps
of Hodur
Into the halls of the gods when he launched at the bosom
of Baldur—
Witless of evil he cast it—the mistletoe-bough, white-
berried—
'Gainst which the body of Baldur alone of all things was
defenceless:
Sightless was Hodur who cast it, impelled to the deed by
the guileful
Speeches my envy had fashioned, breathed low in the
hearing of Hodur—
Me, thrice-accursèd, whose venom of spirit relentless
beholding
How in the sight of the Æsir the glorious Baldur was
cherished:
Meet is it thus I should suffer, the source of such
measureless evil,
I, who alone of all others, brought grief to the gods of
Valhalla.
Weep not, ah weep not, Siguna, for e'en as a web that is
woven,
Passeth before me a vision foreshadowing the doom of the
Æsir:
Yea, in that twilight of systems, the chains shall be broken
asunder,
When fareth Odin to combat with Fenrir the bane of the
god-kind."



LUIS DE CAMOENS.

THE SOLDIER-POET OF PORTUGAL.

By WALTER BUTTERWORTH.

“Agora toma a espada, agora a penna.”

LUIS DE CAMOENS was born in Lisbon in 1524. He sprang from a noble but impoverished family. Little or nothing is known of his childhood, and, though his biographers refer to it as sad and lonely, I have been unable to trace much evidence in confirmation.

In 1537 he was entered at the recently founded Coimbra University as one of the honourable poor students. Those days of study and preparation may be passed over, with the single note that even then, in his teens, the impulse to write came upon him, and he produced a dramatic piece, the “*Amphitrioes*,” which was acted at the college.

In 1542 or 1543 he returned to Lisbon, a bright young fellow, of good family and education, but dependent solely upon his wits should he not succeed in gaining favour at Court. This point was soon settled. The usual happened; he fell deeply in love. The lady was Dona Catherina Atayde, a lady of the palace. The enamoured youth, warmed by the inevitable and imperishable fire, wrote many sonnets and rimas, protestations of his passion. Here is one, finely translated by Southey.

When I behold you, lady! when my eyes
Dwell on the deep enjoyment of your sight,
I give my spirit to that one delight,
And earth appears to me a paradise.
And when I hear you speak, and see you smile,
Full satisfied, absorbed, my centred mind
Deems all the world's vain hopes and joys the while
As empty as the unsubstantial wind.
Lady! I feel your charms, yet dare not raise
To that high theme the unequal song of praise,—
A power for that to language was not given;
Nor marvel I, when I those beauties view,
Lady! that He, whose power created you,
Could form the stars and yonder glorious Heaven.

R. Southey.

Many of the sonnets are conventional, Petrarchian, written in the fashion of the day to *be* in the fashion, tricked out with conceits, antitheses, artificialities of refinement and imagery. But in such sonnets as this, where Camoens is lifted and inspired by a young man's passion, it appears to me the poetry is real.

Apparently Dona Catherina's family disapproved of this attachment, which was mutual, and by their influence at Court, caused Camoens to be banished from Lisbon. He spent a year at Santarem, on the banks of the Tagus, and tried to subdue his grief by writing sonnets, canzons, eclogues, comedies. But inactive life did not suit him. He joined a Portuguese expedition against the Moors at Ceuta, and served for two years. In one engagement against Moorish pirates he lost his right eye by a flying splinter.

On returning to Lisbon he seems to have led an ill-regulated life. Perhaps, like many brother-poets, he found it impossible to settle down to humdrum routine. A crisis soon came. He interfered in a friend's quarrel at a Corpus Christi festival, wounded a servant of the palace,

and was imprisoned. Subsequently he was liberated on volunteering to go to India. At this time the power and influence of Portugal in India was very great, and every Portuguese who had difficulties or troubles at home would naturally turn his eyes to the Empire beyond the sea.

He sailed in 1553, when he was nearly thirty, somewhat melodramatically employing the classic outburst (if legend be true): "*Ingrata patria! non possidebis ossa mea!*" Of the fleet which departed from Lisbon only Camoen's ship reached Goa. "Scorn not the sonnet; with it Camoens soothed an exile's grief."

EXILE.

Tagus, whose streams on Lusitania's plain
Fertility and charm at once bestow,
Errant in fairest fields with softest flow,
Joy to flower, herb, flock, cattle, nymph and swain;
Alas! beloved flood, in vain, in vain
My term of dateless exile would I know;
And mournful thus and desolate I go,
As deeming never to return again.
My envious fortune, ever wise to tell
How best my joy to sorrow may be changed,
Willeth implacably that we should part!
Thee I bewail, her I upbraid. Farewell!
Soon shall these sighs be spent on winds estranged
And alien waters soothe this swelling heart!

Garnett.

Camoens' life in the East was always agitated and adventurous. Soon he was fighting in a company sent by the Viceroy against the King of Cochin, the following year against Corsairs in the Red Sea. All the time these varying scenes were being impressed upon his mind, and were to find their place in his great poem. Nor did he relinquish the habit of writing. In fact his writing was the next occasion for the persistent misfortune which dogged his steps through life. Indignant at the effects

about him of maladministration he wrote a satire, "Disparates na India" (Follies in India), and soon surrounded himself with enemies. He was banished to the Island of Macao, off the coast of China, in 1556. The banishment must, however, have been indulgent enough, for he held there a lucrative post as "Commissary of the estates of deceased persons," and in two years acquired a small competency. It was probably at Macao that he wrote the first six books of the *Lusiads*. At any rate, they were completed when he embarked for Goa in 1558. On the voyage he was shipwrecked, and lost all his possessions, except the precious MS. of his poem. This he preserved (we are assured) by holding it in one hand and swimming to shore with the other. He refers sadly to this incident towards the end of the *Lusiads*:—

And Mecon shall the drowning poetry
Receive upon its breast, benign and bland,
Coming from shipwreck in sad misery,
'Scaped from the stormy shallow to the land
From famines, dangers great, when there shall be
Enforced from harshness the unjust command
On him for whom his loved harmonious lyre
Shall more of *fame* than happiness acquire.

A.

Arrived at Goa, he was overwhelmed with grief to hear of the death of his Catherina:—

ALMA MINHA GENTIL, QUE TE PARTISTE.

My gentle spirit! Thou who hast departed
So early, of this life in discontent,
Rest thou there ever in Heaven's firmament,
While I live here on earth all broken-hearted!
In that ethereal seat, where thou didst rise,
If memory of this life so far consent,
Forget not thou my ardent love unspent,
Which thou didst read so perfect in mine eyes!

And if perchance aught worthy thee appears
 In my great ceaseless anguish for thy death,
 Oh! pray to God who cut so short thy years
 That he would also close my sorrowing breath,
 And swiftly call me hence thy form to see,
 As swiftly he deprived these eyes of thee!

Aubertin.

DEATH.

Sky, earth and air are sleeping silently;
 Sea stealeth slowly o'er the sandy ground;
 Slumber the creatures of the main hath bound;
 Night covers all with mute tranquility:
 Save one disquiet, that, beside the sea,
 Where rippling wave with ruffled froth is crown'd
 Doth with lamenting tongue the name resound
 That now name only must for ever be.
 "Waters, 'ere love hath quite prevailed to slay,
 Restore," he cries, "my maid whom ye to death
 Delivered, from my arms untimely riven."
 None answer, ocean boometh far away;
 Slow bows the wood before the breeze's breath;
 And wind hath taken what to wind was given.

Garnett.

At Goa he was thrown into prison again through his enemies' machinations, on a charge of malversation. It was not infrequently something of an honour in past times to have been exiled or imprisoned. One at once recalls good company—Dante, Tasso, Cellini, Camoens, Cervantes, Raleigh, Bunyan. He refuted the charges, and resumed his military life. Notwithstanding another good appointment in 1567, he remained poor, and was probably both improvident and unpractical. So poor was he that when at last, in 1569, he determined to return home, after an exile of sixteen years, he had to be bought off by some friends from a creditor for £25, when stranded at Mozambique, part way home. It is an interesting comment on the time that when the ship reached Lisbon

she was quarantined because of a dreadful plague (*peste grande*) which had raged the preceding year and had carried off 50,000 victims.

The poet returned to a changed country. Dom João had passed away, and the young, ill-starred, visionary Dom Sebastian reigned in his stead. He found himself unknown, unheeded, in a strange, priest-ridden Court.

In July, 1572, he published the "*Lusiads*," dedicated to young King Sebastian. The work had an immediate and brilliant success, so far as appreciation went. But little solid advantage accrued to the author. Had he flattered the Court, or waited upon priestly influence, it would have been otherwise; but he was no courtier. As it was, the poem excited the jealousy of more favoured writers. It helped to secure him the scanty pension of 5,000 reis (say £20) per annum for his services on behalf of his country.

The record of his last days is very sad. His poverty was so extreme that his Javanese servant, Antonio (or his friend rather), who stood by his master when all others failed, had to beg in the streets to keep them alive. Mickle said that Camoens himself stood begging on the Alcantara Bridge, but this is an example of picturesque mendacity.

He died on June 10th, 1580, in a public hospital, penniless, hopeless. José Indio wrote in his copy of the "*Lusiads*":—

What grief to see so great a genius thus unfortunate. I saw him die in the hospital of Lisbon, without a sheet wherewith to cover himself, after triumphing in the East Indies and voyaging 5,500 leagues by sea.

Of all the misfortunes endured by Camoens perhaps none would be more bitter than the mortification of

witnessing his country's debasement. He lived just long enough to know of the defeat and death of the King at Alcacer-Kibir, and speaking of his country, to exclaim: "I will not only die in it, but with it." In the "*Lusiads*" he had mournfully sung:—

Of men degenerate who so far have strayed
From the high lustrous glories of their sires,
Deep mired in vanities and low desires.

But by good hap the soldier-poet accomplished his work before the evil days came. He wrote in his youth and his prime, when gallant little Portugal still held the foremost place in Europe; when, with her population of but one and a half million souls, she ruled a vast Empire and controlled the ocean highways. At this proudest period of national glory Camoens lived and sang, and, despite his evil fortunes, built up a deathless monument to his country's fame. We are reminded of our own Shakespeare, who also wrote at the time of great national development. But there the parallel ceases. England progressed; Portugal quickly declined, and for nearly sixty years became the vassal of Spain. Shakespeare ended his days in comfort; Camoens, as we have seen, in poverty and despair.

There are many curious points of similarity between his career and that of his contemporary Cervantes. Both were of a decayed noble family; both were brave, constant, blunt, adventurous; both were soldiers, and fought at sea; both had experiences in Africa—Ceuta and Algiers; both were wounded, imprisoned, wrote in prison, died in poverty; both enjoyed insignificant pensions and great posthumous fame; both wrote pastorals, satires, dramas, rimas, epic; both saw the fatherland declining; and, finally, the very remains of both were lost. It is

significant of the times that when the starving Camoens died Cervantes was in shameful captivity, and Tasso was in prison under a tyrannical charge of lunacy.

Let me close this brief review of Camoens' life with the sympathetic words of his disciple, Richard Burton:—

A wayfarer and voyager from his youth; a soldier, somewhat turbulent withal; wounded and blamed for his wounds; a moralist, a humorist, a satirist and consequently no favourite with King Demos, a reverent and religious spirit after his own fashion, (somewhat renaissance, poetic and pagan), by no means after the fashion of others; an outspoken truth-telling, lucre-despising writer, a public servant whose motto was—strange to say—“*Honour not Honours,*” a doughty sword and yet doughtier pen, a type of the chivalrous age, a patriot of the purest water, so jealous of his country's good fame that nothing would satisfy him but to see the world bow before her perfections.

A few words about Camoens' sonnets, canzons and rimas before passing to the “*Lusiads.*” Byron wrote:—“The things given to the public as poems of Camoens are no more to be found in the original Portuguese than in the Song of Solomon.” This sweeping condemnation must now be greatly modified in view of the careful translations by Aubertin, Burton and Dr. Garnett. But the subtler qualities of poetry are dissipated in translation, like the fragrance of a plucked flower. Southey, in speaking of the untranslatable magic of words, said:—“You may retain the meaning, but if the words be changed the spell is lost.” This, indeed, is obvious. We have but to think of some favourite passage in Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley—one of those passages for ever haunted by beauty which we call magical because it eludes analysis—and then to turn to any available translation. It is only recognisable by the fact or sentiment or thought expressed, not at all by the loveliness

with which the poet endowed it, and which will preserve it through the ages. The difficulty in translating from Portuguese to English is especially great. The excessive softness and languorous richness of the Portuguese vowel sounds will no more suffer translation into English, which is a language "made of sterner stuff," than would a tropical plant to our inclement air. As Aubertin says, "the sonnets often float away in a nosegay of vowels."

SADNESS.

Time and the mortal will stand never fast;
 Estranged fates man's confidence estrange;
 Aye with new quality imbued, the vast
 World seems but victual of voracious change.
 New endless growth surrounds on every side,
 Such as we deemed not earth could ever bear;
 Only doth sorrow for past woe abide,
 And sorrow for past good, if good it were.
 Now time with green hath made the meadow gay,
 Late carpeted with snow by winter froze,
 And to lament hath turned my gentle lay:
 Yet of all change this chiefly I deplore,
 The human lot, transformed to ill alway,
 Nor chequered with rare blessing as of yore.

Garnett.

Camoens shorter poems show him in an amiable light. We see him in all moods—indignant, fiery, thoughtful, passionate, sad, resigned; but oftenest pensive, and prone to expatiate on his griefs. The northern temperament is perhaps a little frost-bitten and not to be thawed by the glowing and facile eloquence of the emotional Southron. We are wont to feel that he "doth protest too much." Possibly our reticence errs as much as his demonstrativeness.

Whether in his epic or his shorter poems, Camoens is always distinguished by unaffected simplicity, candour and sweetness. His verse has a natural flow and melody,

with grace and polish, brilliance and vivacity; it is copious, resourceful, harmonious. Someone has remarked that he is always "painting pictures of himself." This is, I believe, largely true of every genuine writer. To talk of absolute objectivity seems to me to be playing with words. What a man writes is of no value if he has not put something of himself into it. Camoens tells us all about what passed within himself with engaging frankness. Faults and follies, ardours and disillusionments, joys and sorrows, strength and weakness, all are there, reflected in the shining mirror of his verse, and the more we read of the impressionable poet the more we like him.

OS LUSIADAS.

The "*Lusiads*" consists of ten cantos, containing one thousand one hundred and two eight-lined stanzas, so that, compared with the other great epics of Europe, it is rather brief. It occupies a singular position, for after the many silent centuries—silent so far as such productions are concerned—which slipped away from Homer to Virgil, and from Virgil through the Middle Ages, this masterpiece of Camoens', the brilliant, glowing flower of Lusitania, was the first of modern epics. Spain, it is true, had produced that spirited epic fragment, the "*Poema del Cid*." It was, however, but a fragment, and though it will live by virtue of its grip and strength, its vigour, truth, and picturesque presentment of a phase in national development, yet it was rude in form and language. Thus some thousand or more years elapsed from Homer to Virgil, and nearly sixteen centuries from Virgil to Camoens. I leave aside Dante and Ariosto, for the "*Divina Commedia*" and the "*Orlando Furioso*" cannot strictly be classed as epics. Like the succeeding great works of Spenser, Milton and Goethe, they departed in

varying degrees from the old ideas of the epic (simple and heroic), and assumed various forms which we recognise as modern. Camoens, like Tasso, who was engaged upon his "*Gerusalemme Liberata*" at the same time as Camoens upon his "*Lusiads*," followed the classic models, and these two poems, the product of the same age, exhibit curiously the transition from ancient to modern ideas and methods. A slight sketch of the "*Lusiads*" will best illustrate this.

The opening declares that the whole history of Portuguese achievement is to be the theme, especially the discovery of the sea route to India by the Cape of Good Hope. Despite high opinions to the contrary, the choice of subject was, I think, singularly happy. It enabled Camoens, in the very hey-day of national power, to sing the national pride and exultation.

Like England, the Portuguese were a hardy, plucky little nation, monarchs of the sea. They had gradually opened out the coast of West Africa to the Cape, in 1497 had penetrated to India, and shortly afterwards had discovered "*magnificent Brazil*." These conquests of lands beyond the seas had enabled them to wrest the Eastern trade from the Turks—from Alexandria, the Levant and the Italian cities. Lisbon had become the great distributing centre for Europe. It was natural, therefore, for Camoens to celebrate these deeds, and in particular those of

Vasco da Gama, valiant capitayn,
For derring-do the noblest volunteer,
Of noble courage and of noble strain,
Whom smile of constant fortune loved to cheer.

The "*valiant capitayn*" left Lisbon in 1497 with four small craft to traverse unknown seas in search of India. Scarce have the little fleet got well out to sea when an

Olympian council is called, and the gods debate this daring attempt of the human adventurers.

When lo! on luminous Olympus' height
Where dwells the government of human fate,
In council glorious all the gods unite,
And all the future of the East debate;
Treading the lovely crystal heaven of light,
Over the milky way they come in state,
By grandson fair of Atlas old above
Convoked, as ordered by the Thunderer, Jove.

The council of the gods is described with spirit and in a lofty style. Jupiter calls attention to the enterprise of the Lusitanians.

Now well ye mark that sailing fearlessly
In fragile barque o'er tracts uncoursed before,
O'er unsure seas, not doubting to defy
Afric's and Notus' force, they venture more;
And having ocean crossed in times gone by
Those parts where day is long, where short, to explore,
They turn their purpose and their enterprise
To view the cradles whence the mornings rise.

Bacchus is filled with jealousy and enmity against the adventures, but Venus and Mars are friendly, and the council breaks up disposed to favour the expedition. Bacchus, however, determines to destroy the fleet. When they land at Mozambique he poisons the minds of the natives, who lay an ambush for them, but are defeated. He then introduces a treacherous pilot, who would have led the fleet to destruction but for the tender solicitude of Venus. Venus hastens to the father of the gods, and in a lovely scene complains of the ill-doing of Bacchus. To reassure her Jupiter prophesies the success and future glory of her favourites.

Da Gama proceeds to Melinde, where the native king receives him hospitably and with honours. Requested by

him Da Gama enters upon a long narration of the history of Portugal, from which the famous episode of Ines de Castro may be selected as representative. The tragic tale is told with deep feeling, earnestness and unaffected pathos.

Da Gama continues his long narrative of battles, and of the chief events of each succeeding reign, until he comes to that of Dom Manoel. To him appear in a dream personifications of the rivers Ganges and Indus. Dom Manoel resolves to fit out an expedition for India, and commissions Vasco da Gama, the present narrator, to make the attempt. The extract describing the departure of the fleet will illustrate some of the best features of Camoens' style, his easy flow of adequate language, his picturesqueness, his high imaginative faculty, dignity and sympathy with human feelings.

Little by little now receding sight
 Parts from our country's mountains which remained ;
 Dear Tagus, too, remained and Cintra's height,
 Which for long time our longing eyes retained ;
 There also in the home of our delight
 The heart was left behind, by grief constrained,
 And then, when all was hidden from the eye,
 At last we nothing saw but sea and sky.

Camoens had of course large experience of the sea in all its moods, which he describes with unsurpassed fidelity. Whether it be in calm :—

Where softly plash the music-murmuring waves,
 when :—

A sudden silence husheth every wind
 And makes the wavelet plash with softer chime,
 to violent scenes of storm.

The rounding of the Cape is made the occasion of one of those incidents which have helped so much to secure the popularity of the poem.

Da Gama concludes his long digression. It has occupied one-third of the whole poem, and is perhaps a rather clumsy device in its structure.

The thread is now resumed, and the fleet leaves Melinde to cross the ocean from East Africa to India. Bacchus makes one more effort to effect their ruin. He visits Neptune in his sea palace. All the sea gods are called together and are prevailed upon by Bacchus. Æolus is instructed "to let loose the fury of the winds" that the little fleet may be engulfed. Meantime the sailors are yarning and entertaining each other. Velloso, who is the humorous figure of the poem, tells of the twelve Portuguese knights who went over to England and there overthrew the caitiff English who had spoken ill of the ladies of their own land. While they are engrossed in the story-telling a terrible storm breaks upon them. It is described with great spirit. Da Gama prays for Divine aid. Venus hastens to call her nymphs to subdue the winds, and a calm morning ensues with longed-for India in sight.

The attempts at diplomacy and commercial relations between Da Gama and the Indians may be passed over. At last their prow is turned towards home, and they anticipate

The rapture their dear land to reach again ;
Their loved Penates and their kith and kind,
To tell their rare wild wanderings o'er the main,
The various skies and people left behind ;
To come to enjoy rewards they must obtain,
For so long toils and accidents combined,
Emotion so profound awakes in all,
The heart to hold its vessel proves too small.

One other episode must be mentioned. It is the description of an enchanted island, prepared by Venus for the delectation of her mariners, and intended as an allegory of the rewards due to courageous enterprise and gallant achievement. Camoens wrote here with a grace, a warmth, a rich and amorous fancy which remind one of Tasso's "Garden of Armida." It is a universally favourite passage.

After rest and recreation on the island, during which a nymph foretells the greatness of Portugal down to Camoens' own time, the fleet has a smooth passage to Lisbon, and the poet concludes with some mournful but dignified stanzas.

I have made a very cursory and imperfect attempt to describe the work of Camoens, but I hope something of the brilliant and unfortunate poet's personality may be realised. It is a pity that Portuguese is so little read in this country. It is a fine language, and Camoens alone is a literary delight of the first order. In the sedentary life which most of us have to follow the man himself is a tonic, with his voyages and fighting and hairbreadth escapes and wonderful faculty of reproducing the scenes he had lived in, whether his favourite Cintra, the banks of the Tagus or the gorgeous East, the lands of

Flowering odours, cassia, nard and balm.

Describing scenes as he does, not from books, but as a traveller, he has a fire and a fidelity rare indeed. There are times when the recital of historic facts becomes stale and uninspired, but even then he is robust and straightforward. Generally his style is very spirited, when he tells of

The gallant cavaliers, whose gestes of glory
Added a lustre to our Lusian story.

or of the clash of battle

While mothers trembling at the terrible storm
Embraced with tighter arm each tiny form.

We are helped to realise the tide of Columbus and Da
Gama when we read:—

When poised on topmost yard, in giddy space,
“Land!” shouts a lynx-eyed sailor, “land ahead!”
Hurry the crews on deck in huge delight
And over Orient sky-rim strain the sight.

Or at a sadder moment, when death has overtaken one of
them:—

How easy for a man's bones a grave is found,
Earth's any wrinkle, ocean's any wave.

Or at the joyful home-coming:—

This is my happy land, my home, my pride,
Where, if the Heavens but grant the prayer I pray
For glad return and every risk defied
There may my life-light fail and fade away.

Many passages nobly conceived might be quoted. Here
are two on the power of gold and on government:—

This doth the strongest fortresses o'erthrow,
Makes traitors, and turns friends all false to be;
This tempts the noblest into actions low,
And captains renders to the enemy:
This virgins will corrupt, as pure as snow,
Nought fearing for their fame or dignity:
This sometimes will the sciences deprave
The judgments blind, the consciences enslave.

This doth the texts with subtlety refined
Interpret; this makes laws, and laws doth spurn:
This causes perjuries among mankind,
And thousand times doth kings to tyrants turn:

Yea, those who to the Almighty their whole mind
Have vowed, a thousand times, as you will learn,
This charmer doth corrupt and doth enthrall;
But not without some virtuous show, withal.
Oh, how a king who governs well should see
That counsellors, and those more intimate,
With love sincere and true, endowed should be,
With conscience and with purity innate!
For, as he thronèd sits in majesty,
Of matters far removed, affairs of state,
But little more can he be made aware
Than what the official tongue may choose declare.

It is needless to remark that Camoens' poetry is far from faultless. Even Homer nods. The historic, annalistic, geographical parts of the "Lusiads" are sometimes tedious; the devices for lugging in the historic details are not happily contrived, and the reader has to swallow a large dose of improbability; the description of the banners repeats what has already been told; the even fluency tends to be monotonous, though Camoens could compress as well as expand, and it is a saving grace that he is never turgid or obscure. He was not remarkable for originality; he went through the prevailing fashions, and was in turn pastoral, artificial, fantastical. He borrowed from Petrarca, as Petrarca did from Dante, and as nearly all poets borrow one from another. His comedies are but of moderate quality, and may be left out of account in this paper. In the scheme of his epic he rather slavishly followed the classic models, confusing and intermingling Greek mythology with Christianity. Tieck considered this blend of Christian and Pagan ideas one of Camoens' highest beauties. It is difficult to see why. Clearly he set himself to follow in the wake of Virgil and to build up his epic on the approved plan. He recalled the classical studies of his college days at Coimbra, and filled his poem with the stock mythological allusions. Probably the

pleasure which so many poets have felt in recasting the old material was heightened in his case by his writing far away from his books—in Africa, India, China, and as a consequence there is in the "*Lusiads*" little of the bookishness which takes the freshness out of many modern poets.

With all this machinery of classic mythology there is yet God over all, to whom the devout Da Gama prays, and who works His will through the Pagan gods and goddesses. It reads queerly now, but such incongruities were common during the ferment of the Renaissance, as our own Spenser shows. At the most it is an external detail, of slight importance.

Camoens seldom or never reaches sublimity. Though he wrote one of the few successful epics of the world, the grander attributes of the epic form were somewhat alien to his nature. There was no austerity in him. He was ever glad to turn from sterner themes to those of love and tenderness. It may be said of the "*Lusiads*" as Leigh Hunt said of the "*Gerusalemme*," that it was "the poem of tenderness." As for love, Venus and Cupid are made to play very prominent parts in the epic, and the episode of the *Ilha dos Amores* is as ardent as anything penned by Burns. Burton spoke of Camoens' "exceptional power of spiritualising the material." The remark is just, but the illustration given—that of "the tender voluptuousness of Venus in the heavenly court,"—was rather a materialising of the spiritual.

It may be said of Camoens that not seldom "his words were born, not on his lips, but in his soul." Throughout, but most of all at the close of the cantos when he gathers up his forces, he has fineness of ethical perception, a high tone, an inspiration in all that concerns his country; though his patriotism made him atrociously unfair to the

highly-cultured Moors whom his heroes had to oppose, and often blinded him to the policy of gripe, greed and plunder carried on in the East.

By the peculiarly national quality of the "Lusiads" he has taken the same place in the hearts of the Portuguese which Shakespeare holds in ours. It is not difficult for us to understand and to sympathise even if their enthusiasm goes beyond ours for our own poet. His masterpiece has been called "the episodic history of Portugal written in verse," and Camoens is indeed the historian of his country in the sense in which Shakespeare is of ours. Naturally he idealised the national achievements, and his expansive temperament was wont to lead him to the hyperbolical. It is peculiarly the epic of exploration, of world discovery, of international commerce, and has a special attraction for those who can study geography imaginatively and associate it with the movements of humanity over the face of the globe. In this respect it is a pioneer work and not an imitator. As a sea-poem it shares the honours with the *Odyssey*. "*Elle n'a pour théâtre qu'un vaisseau, pour horizon que le ciel et la mer,*" is the picturesque observation of a French critic. Camoens had spent much of his time on the high seas, he represented a maritime nation, and his subject was a great deed of exploration across unknown waters.

It was fortunate that a poet arose who raised the language to its perfection, and who represented the glory of a nation which was shortly to sink so low. She may well cherish the golden singer of her golden age.

AT LLEWENI.

By S. BRADBURY.

FROM mills and marts and haunts of men
Here comes no sound to vex one's humour;
I lack as little as I ken

From East or West the latest rumour;
My East and West are where, in turn,
Though night and day in turn would dally,
The fires of dawn and sunset burn
At either end of this green valley!

Hence, midway down the western skies,
I watch the sun—my only sorrow
That one day less of promise lies
Betwixt me and the final morrow—
Through curling smoke-wreaths, half in doubt
And half in hope of once more getting
An evening rise—of hungry trout—
As yon pool reddens at his setting.

Meanwhile so cool this tent of green,
This grassy couch beneath so pleasant,
Old Time himself, sunbrowned between
His locks and beard of grey, at present
Passing, might halt and put away
The scythe which his poor arms encumbers
And drowse an hour—whilst I would stay
To see that nought disturb his slumbers!



TALLEMANT DES REAUX.

By EDMUND MERCER.

IT will be impossible to find in any country in any period so many creditable and even excellent writers of memoirs, anecdotes and personal revelations as have, so far, been discovered in the France of the seventeenth century. When we run over the names that just occur to us, Sully, Rohan, Fontenay-Mareuil, Madame de Motteville, La Rochefoucauld, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, Bussy-Rabutin, the Marquis de Villars, Choisy, Madame La Fayette, the Duchesse de Nemours, Madame de Caylus, Pierre L'Estoile, the Marquis de Bassompierre, D'Artagnan, we mention a mere smattering of the stars forming this biographic Pleiad. It was therefore an easy task for a Dumas or any other writer of sufficient assurance, with the aid of fictitious catalogue numbers in imaginary libraries, to discover and foist on the easy-going, un-inquisitive reader as genuine non-existent manuscripts, such as those of the Comte de la Fère. The instance just quoted was innocent enough, and there is no more quarrel with Dumas than with Scott for a similar course of mild deception.

In this multitude of semi-historians Tallemant des Réaux holds a unique position, a position like that of a hidden planet or a clever detective; he was there all the time, but he was never discovered till long afterwards. Among

his contemporaries he was "a chiel takkin' notes" without, it is clear, the slightest intention to "prent 'em"; a wise course in a country where rapiers for two and a coffin for one was the established form of libel suit. Like many another gentleman of wealth and high social standing with no particular business requiring attention, he knew and was known by nearly everybody worth knowing; but it was given only to one or two of his most intimate friends to learn, and that chiefly after his retirement from Paris, of his principal adventures with the pen. To this judicious modesty he owed his peace of mind and the subsequent curious wanderings of his manuscripts, of which we shall have somewhat to say presently. This reticence also extended to his writings. Although with him the capital "I" is a very prominent initial letter (when its French equivalent is Englished), and often reminds one of Brantôme's use of it, there lurks about it nothing of the earlier writer's quaint and forgiveable egotism. The older man ran the whole gamut of the Cæsarean vaunt, "veni, vedi, vici," the later author omits the boast. We know all he had to tell of what he saw and heard, but none knows what he did. Again, we say, a remarkable personal modesty in an age when the immodest was the fashionable, and egregious laudation of an inferior production ran to greater length than the work itself. Truly the man was no fool. So it is that what has come down to us of his life is only so much as is entered in and may be inferred from public archives.

He was born at La Rochelle on the 7th of November, 1619, shortly after Louis XIII. ascended the French throne, and a few years prior to the ministry of Cardinal Richelieu. Gédéon was the name bestowed on him at his christening, but it does not seem to have attached to him as though it were really his. To all his world he was

either "Talleyant" or "Des Réaux;" no French writers, referring to him, have had the slightest respect for his only Christian name. His father, Pierre of that ilk, was not of the nobility, albeit he was wealthy and had good connections. Favart says he was a "politician whom Colbert ruined." This is not flattering to either politician or financier, neither is it true; perhaps Favart had some ulterior purpose in the utterance. If we say that Tallemant senior and his splendid worldly estate "retired together into private life during the Ministry of Colbert" we are nearer the mark. Tallemant père married twice; his second wife, mother of our author, being of the house of Rambouillet—the financial, not the noble, family of that name, though the latter, by coincidence, played a conspicuous part in the Des Réaux records. She was sister of that seventeenth-century Rothschild, Nicolas Rambouillet, who made the magnificent gardens at Reuilly and gave his patronymic to a Paris street, and whose daughter was destined to further the fortunes of her cousin Gédéon. Madame Pierre Tallemant not only imbued this young gentleman with a taste for light learning, but seems to have conferred similar tendencies on a second of her offspring, the Abbé Tallemant, whose translation of Plutarch's *Lives* superseded for a half-century or so that of Amyot. So much for the parentage of our "bourgeois scandalmonger," as Sainte-Beuve styles him, to whom in the following notes, to avoid confusion, the name "Talleyant" or "Des Réaux," where not otherwise qualified, must be understood to apply.

At the age of nineteen Tallemant travelled into Italy with a brother and a half—to be precise, with a half-brother and the future Abbé Tallemant—under the wings of that scarecrow, Paul de Gondi, Abbé de Retz, and, sometime later, Cardinal. Speaking of him after he had

secured his barret, Tallemant observes: "He is a little black man, short-sighted, crookedly built, ugly, clumsy at everything requiring a pair of hands. His dominant passion is ambition; his manner is always uneasy, and he suffers from perennial biliousness." One cannot fail to recognise in these few terse phrases the "Monsieur le Coadjuteur" drawn by Dumas in "Twenty Years After," the Quilp-like figure who played so Macchiavellian a part in the Wars of the Fronde.

Returned to Paris, Tallemant took degrees in Civil and Ecclesiastical Law, the intention of his father being the magistracy and the purchase of a post as Counsellor of Parliament. The young man's ideas were otherwise; he expressed a strong love for independence which might be construed into a euphemism for living without work. He was not, however, devoid of means of his own, and he shows himself to have been no lazy fool when he says on this topic: "I detested the business; besides, I was not rich enough to pitch forty thousand écus into the gutter." So he seems to have visited his uncle, Nicolas Rambouillet, and made a proposal for the hand and munificent dowry of his pretty little eleven-year-old cousin, Elizabeth, whom he married in two years. By this marriage, as well as by birth, he became one of that class of wealthy men whom the nobility looked upon as chums when it did not stigmatise them extortioners. Secure of that "independence" so dear to him, he at once yielded himself without stint to the culture of the literature and society of which he was so enamoured and has so happily combined in his "Historiettes." Little is known—lucky husband for those days!—of his wedded life except that he and his wife were very much in love with each other. That he had a daughter may only be inferred from his passages on Madame de Montausier, where he mentions a little Des

Réaux—with a feminine adjective—who played with Mademoiselle de Montausier. That he had no other children or that none survived him may be guessed from the knowledge that after the death of his widow his possessions passed to the descendants of one of his brothers.

Tallemant's entry into circles social and literary was by way of the front doors of the Hotel de Rambouillet, where he became first favourite with the old Marquise, the pioneeress of the "Salon," not, let us say, on account of any relationship between the two Rambouillet families—the name was a mere coincidence—but by reason of the engaging qualities of his manner and mind. Owner of a large auditory capacity, a retentive memory, the questioning ability of a grand inquisitor, he was an excellent companion for the Henri-Quatre beauty, who had ripened into a Louis-Quatorze dowager, garrulous, reminiscent, double-chinned, with her fulness of wise saws and sixteenth-century scandal. This lady, Roman by birth and build, famed for her receptions and her knowledge of the secret history of the Court of Henry IV., clearly gave to Tallemant the materials for the opening of his decalogue. Not that she suggested his jotting them down. The probabilities are the other way; the moment his calepin had opened her mouth would have closed. She was too staid a dame knowingly to allow her utterances to be reported; staid with that awful dignity, something hereditary, an Ossa-on-Pelion demeanour traditional amongst the dames of her maternal ancestry, the Savelli, a solemnity added to solemnity generation after generation. In her it had reached such a degree that her wickedest and wittiest apophthegms were pronounced with all the gravity due to a prayer. For Tallemant, at all events, she was a well-spring of truth, a little defiled perhaps, but still truth, a kind of history in deshabelle. In his early pages,

dealing with those whom he barely knew, Henry IV., Sully, Marguérite de Valois, and others of the same date, he was her echo. Indeed, in his preface to this part of his work—written before he had made the collection of stories from his own observations—he admitted, “It is from her that I have gathered the best and greatest part of what I have written and shall write in these pages.” To her receptions he was indebted for his introduction to the great and little panjandruns he so wittily hit off. He missed no one, even the officials and servitors of the mansion are not too sacred for his gossip. Here, too, he congened with those kindred spirits, the minor poets (he, after the common fashion, first committed himself in verse) Chapelaine, Malherbe, Voiture, Mademoiselle de Scudéry and a few forgotten others who had sung the praises of their hostess as “Arthenice,” an anagram on her name, Catherine. Tallemant was really fond of poetry, chiefly of the secondary order, and left large manuscript collections of it, both borrowed and original, which it is difficult to distinguish. He tossed off society verse with fatal ease; verse very much of a kind with that of his compeers, of whom the literary handbooks had been unaware were it not that their little fame had been unintentionally preserved in the “Historiettes.” That fame was not always of a nature to commend itself to its owner. To most oblivion were better than ridicule. It is certainly no compliment to Perrot d’Ablancourt to be remembered as “the author of innumerable translations from the classics that are no longer read. They were called ‘the beautiful wantons,’ they were so incorrect.” Perhaps the best example of Tallemant’s incursions into poetry is the dainty so-called madrigal which figured in “La Guirlande de Julie.” Julie, known in her circle as “La Princesse des Précieuses,” was Julie d’Angennes,

daughter of the Marquise de Rambouillet. About to be married to Monsieur Montausier, that gallant gentleman conceived an idea for making her a most noteworthy and costly present. He went the round of the Rambouillet poets, insisted that each should choose a different flower and write verses wherein such flower should pay compliments to the bride-to-be. The flowers were then illuminated each at the head of its own sheet of vellum, and the verses duly composed were despatched to Mons. Jarry, the most skilful calligraphist in France, to be inscribed beneath the corresponding blossom. The sheets were then bound in Morocco leather, decorated with specially-prepared designs formed of the initials of the lady. In truth, a dainty and original gift. Tallemant was fortunate in choosing the national emblem, the fleur-de-lis. Bearing in mind the quaint legend that this flower, which has long shone on the blue escutcheon of France, originally fell from the open sky at the feet of one of the early kings, Tallemant, in simple words and form of stanza, conveyed a pretty idea in an effective manner. We append a version with all due apologies:—

Within thy beauty's rays I lose
 The prize my beauty gained for me;
 No greater glory do I choose
 Than that of being crown for thee.

In olden time I was the flower
 Esteemed the best of earthly things
 That highest heaven held in dower
 As signal honour for our kings.

But should I my desire obtain
 Of finding favour in thine eyes,
 Such fate would be more glorious gain
 Than having blossomed in the skies.

By his purchase of the estate of Plessis-Rideau, near

Anjou, in 1650, the name being changed by letters patent to Des Réaux, Tallemant made acquaintance with the rhetorical Patru, arbiter alike of literary tongue and taste in the Academy. Employing his services in a lawsuit concerning the land, the litigant found his counsellor's avidity for matters literary so correspondent with his own inclinations that, whatever the result of the litigation, the two became fast friends, confiding for the space of thirty years their literary secrets to each other. Tallemant's eagerness for Patru's society became almost a passion, and if the truth were ascertainable it would be no surprise to discover that it was the client who had persuaded the lawyer to give up, as he did, a promising practice that threatened to interfere with the cultivation of literature, the client meanwhile providing the income for both.

During the next few years Tallemant amused himself with his avocation as a lettered Autolycus till, in 1655, his desk—a very marine stores of biography—being about full, he set himself to a kind of congenial spring cleaning. Two years' polishing and arranging moulded his chaos of notes into an orderly world of chapters with appropriate titles. A fair copy was made, not so much for use as for preservation. It was a sort of literary embalmment, a biography in catalepsy for burial in the family archives, and there was an end of the business for a century and three-quarters. Tallemant even wrote the epitaph of the work wherein it appeared to have been named "Historiettes," and from his reference therein to a projected book on Anne of Austria, to be entitled "Mémoires sur la Régence," we may infer his intention to resuscitate the mummy at a fitting time. His secret history of the Regency is a bibliographical curiosity. Its secret has been well kept. No one knows, nor does anyone deny, that he wrote it. The only fragment that has been

discovered to the present is its written name, and so it remains a title without a book.

The form of the "Historiettes"—which run to ten volumes containing some two thousand five hundred octavo pages—is a series of nearly four hundred chapters or articles, each bearing the name of some person, famous notorious or obscure—the latter prevailing—and a few articles under general titles. There is no order in the arrangement of these chapters, either alphabetical or chronological. Many of them are isolated from all the rest, while the relation of some to others is that of the axiom, "it takes two to make a quarrel" or a conversation; the subjects were perhaps husband and wife, lived in the same street, met in the same house, fought a duel, were the victims of some intrigue or the chief actors in some scandalous adventure. The articles are not biographies, but collections of anecdotes and stories of the person under whose name they appear, and form a voluminous commentary on the persons most noted in literature and society from the reign of Henri IV. to the middle of the seventeenth century. Tallemant was no biographer. He never troubled about the birth of his subject unless he were a parvenu of obscure origin or a noble with a clear title to the bar sinister on his escutcheon; nor about his death except it were the result of some duel, outcome of a liaison, or accompanied by extreme unction at the hands of Mons. le Prévôt. Neither was he a historian. It was not for him to make photographs of events; he was quite satisfied to light them up. In letters, history and biography the place of Tallemant's work may be estimated by its secondary title, "*Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du dix-septième siècle.*" There is no book in either English or French literature with which the "Historiettes" may be exactly compared. Sainte-Beuve, in one of his

earliest "Causeries" has placed Tallemant's work beside the "Histoire Amoureuse" of Bussy-Rabutin—whom, in distinguishing from Tallemant, he styles the "aristocratic scandalmonger." If this can be called a comparison, it is rather that of contrast than of similarity, for which perhaps the simultaneous publication of the two works may be responsible. The greater resemblance is with Brantôme's "Vie des Dames Illustres" and "Vie des Grands Capitaines;" and this is only in form, Brantôme being in these works essentially biographic, Tallemant mainly anecdotic. We must perforce admit a similarity in the perfervid amorousness of the two writers, with this distinction, Brantôme gathered his—to use a French euphemism—cynicism into one highly-spiced porringer; Tallemant peppered every little dish, though Brantôme gained by his greater literary excellence, which the comparative length of his studies favoured. Anecdote is a flashlight, biography the glow of the lamp. Tallemant's "style" is ended ere it is well begun; Brantôme's falls on us as a glamour and with the greater effect. In matters of style momentary brilliance is less than continual brightness, staying-power is the valuable asset. Of English writers, Pepys seems to us to have the largest affinity with Tallemant, larger even than has Brantôme. Were we to segregate the observations, descriptions of persons, anecdotes, witticisms, pictures, scandals and the ten thousand matters that blend into the delicious compound of Pepys' Diary, and then classify them under various headings with as much continuity as they permitted, we should possess a capital English type of the "Historiettes" of Tallemant. Between the two authors there exist not only a similarity of diction—Tallemant a little more malicious, more witty, but less garrulous, less simple, less charmingly egotistic—but coincidences of historical period,

literary activity, social position, pursuits, tastes, studies. From such considerations the wonder is that Pepys did not write his observations in Tallemant's form, or Tallemant keep a gossiping diary. What a lost opportunity that these two never met! As an example of this twindom, let us say of Tallemant, "he must not be too severely judged. He lived in a time when the worst examples abounded, a time of Court intrigue and State revolution, when nothing was certain for a moment, and when all who were possessed of any opportunity to make profit used it with the most shameless avidity, lest the golden minutes should pass away unimproved." Is it not, as far as it goes true of him? Yet these are Scott's words of apology written of Pepys when his Diary was first published: "The society of the seventeenth century offers singular contrasts to the observer. Young men of Court and city, women of high rank, even everyday folk, lent themselves to shameful vices; and their conduct was stigmatised in the most malicious of satires and plays. When old age had scotched the passions, religious fervour held sway, and the greater part of the sowers of wild oats garnered their harvest in the guise of the strictest austerity." This, though it might well be, was not written of Pepys or of England; it is Mons. Monmerqué's excuse for Tallemant. Even their respective manuscripts, inanimate things, met with parallel adventures. Pepys' Diary, written from 1659 to 1669, passed, on his death in 1703, to the library of Magdalen College, Cambridge, where it lay unknown to the printer till 1825, one hundred and twenty-two years too late for its author to edit it. Tallemant's manuscript, penned from 1657 to 1660, passed, after his death somewhere between 1691 and 1701, to his great-niece, in the possession of whose descendants it remained till 1803, when it fell by purchase into various hands, and at

length into the hands of the editors, who first gave it to the printer in 1833, one hundred and thirty years after the decay of its power to work harm to the personages it dealt with too familiarly.

Of Tallemant's life after he gathered in his harvest of gossip nothing material has come to light. He hinted at some serious trouble and sorrow about the time of the death of Patru, and that he was converted from a Huguenot to a Catholic. The date and manner of his decease are alike uncertain. We know he was living in the last decade of his century, but his helpmate was a widow in 1701. He was not quite overlooked by his contemporaries, though, with a dominant passion that Captain Cuttle would have approved to the full, he did more for them than they for him. They published everything they wrote, could they find a printer more of a fool than (may we say) of a "Barabbas;" he of his own free will published nothing. They knew only his verses and letters, fluttering round, a kite-tail of odd scraps of paper. Could they have spied upon that sacred volume devoted to his "Index Societatis," the notoriety of Tallemant would have been etched into their every work. Under such conditions it is not easy to obtain a trustworthy contemporary criticism of his literary position. He was a secondary poet, as good perhaps as most, but, from his utter carelessness with his own manuscript verse, he doubtless regarded such efforts with a fine contempt. Compare his scrupulous regard for the "Historiettes." Said Maucroix: "He was one of the most honourable and upright men I have ever known. With great mental qualities, he had an excellent memory, wrote well, both in prose and verse, and with marvellous facility. Had his composition cost him more labour it would have been more correct." (Maucroix seems in this phrase to have had in

mind the inelastic code for versifying *aux précieuses*, otherwise he apparently contradicted himself.) Continuing, "He was perhaps a little too readily contented with his first thoughts, and, notwithstanding the fine quality of his wit, few people equalled him in fecundity. Never was man so exact. He spoke readily but precisely, and told a story as well as any man in France." The Abbé de Marolles in his *Mémoires* invariably spoke of Tallemant as a man of distinguishing intellect. "Mons. des Réaux and the Abbé Tallemant, his brother, possess such polished and delicate minds," and in another phrase he placed Des Réaux amongst "that select coterie of Frenchmen who are masters of epigram. The good Abbé de Villeloin, of unenviable reputation as the worst possible translator of the best Latin poets, was very prodigal of his praise for Tallemant; but then he soused everyone he knew and liked. For the moment, therefore, all we get from Tallemant's contemporaries is a sincere respect for his excellent personal character and his intellectual qualities. The value of Tallemant to students of to-day, however, depends in no wise upon his personal merit, but upon the incomparable and invaluable records he kept. In spite of their occasional malice—a malice free from the poison of rancour, personal spite or enmity, or sinister intention—their epigrammatic diction, their apparent flippancy, their, to some minds, want of seriousness, they contain no direct falsity nor show any intention of deceit. He was a scandalmonger, but not necessarily a liar or libeller. The sources of his information were good, his facts true; some of his most astounding assertions indeed have been corroborated by many contemporaries who—to use a Hibernicism—were dead before they heard of his work. Though he was at times undoubtedly guilty of exaggeration, it was in his manner of narrating his incidents, and not

in the incidents themselves; it is hyperbole, not falsehood. To exemplify; of that pompous parvenu, Sarrazin, who, despite his imperialism in criticism, failed to find the meagrest place in French literature, it was common knowledge that his vehicle was good and his cattle poor. Tallemant summed him up in a phrase, "True, he has a carriage, but his horses are the skinniest garrons in France."

The "Historiettes" begin with Henri IV., and end with the great and little lights of 1660. Much of what Tallemant wrote in his earliest pages was hearsay, reported from that human phonograph, the Marquise de Rambouillet. For what proportion of the wit and wickedness in those pages she was responsible it is impossible to say. At all events, she could have had no better chronicler than Tallemant. That he was as witty and cynical as herself is evident from his transcripts of his own observations. Many readers have not properly understood Tallemant's literary character. Unfortunately for our anecdotist, his editors printed his first volume alone without introduction or biographical preface. As this contained his notes on people who lived under the Valois and whom for the most part he never knew, the first published impression of the critics—and first impressions are difficult of eradication as weeds—was that the volume was a malicious attempt to sully the characters of Henri IV. and Sully, his wisest Minister. This is, of course, a mistake. The early critics failed to recognise Tallemant as anecdotic in endeavouring to prove him historic. History he left to the recorders of events, himself being satisfied with his stories, not of peccadilloes as such, but of jest and fun. He preferred to tell of the King's mistresses rather than his exploits, and gave more play to the royal gallantries of Mons. Greenbreeches than

to his doings as monarch. What he disclosed of Henri was quite consistent with the King's character. He said, innocently enough, that Henri was never liberal nor too recognisant of merit. What of that? Henri of Navarre suffered for a large part of his life from an attenuated purse. Enforced economy was a trait of Gascon nobility. Henri of France, with all the resources of his Exchequer in the background, never acquired the habit of easy expenditure. Sobieski, of Poland, said, untruthfully, that "he was possessed with avarice." But Sobieski expected more than he got, and, with this want of polish, expressed his thanks for nothing. La Mesnadière and Malherbe, poets both, had also a derogatory word or two to say; possibly the monarch was wise to decline to pay first-rate prices for second and lesser rate rhyme. Tallemant also had it that Henri "was a skilful, natural-born thief; he could not stay his hand from appropriating everything he fancied, but it was always returned. He laughingly said had he not been King he would have been hanged several times." This sounds incredible; yet Sully made a similar observation. Of this Minister, Tallemant reported him as saying that "in the service of Henri he had damned himself in all manner of religions." In a gossip on Henri's first wife, Marguérite of Valois, we read of her as "King Margot," that she was accustomed to "the recital of quantities of strange masses and vespers," and that she made a practice of bearing illegitimate children. Incidentally we learn that the Constable de Montmorency could do anything with horses, and had one trait in common with them, "that he was unable to read." Of Henry VIII. of England and Anne Boleyn, Tallemant, in a passing reference, said that the King during the lifetime of his wife, promising the said Anne marriage, she made reply: "Ah, sire, it is such promises of marriage that

spoil maids." Within his own time and observation Tallemant was himself. He has made the fame of old, gossipy, naughty Madame de Pilon, who had a weakness for Duchesses, and was celebrated as one of the antiquities of Paris. He has introduced us to one of the most famous of absent-minded men, Mons. de Brancas, of whom La Bruyère told so many strange incidents under the name of Menalcas, quoted in Addison's "Spectator." In the "Historiettes" all these and more stories of the man appear, and as La Bruyère was only learning to write when Tallemant's work lay complete in its strong box, there can be no question as to which author came first. Plagiarism need not be considered. Brancas was such an absurdity that his doings were common knowledge. One of Tallemant's anecdotes is worth quotation. "On the day of his marriage Brancas went to the baths and asked for a bedroom to be prepared, as he intended to sleep there that night. 'Sir, you cannot sleep here!' 'Yes, most certainly I shall!' 'You must be dreaming, sir; you were married this morning!' 'Was I? Well, I never dreamt of that!'" The Maréchal de Gramont was Tallemant's great aversion. His bestiality was notorious; he had killed his wife and then offered marriage to Tallemant's little friend, Julie d'Angennes. In spite of Tallemant's efforts to prevent it, the marriage might have taken place, but, fortunately, Gramont's father was so niggardly with his settlements that negotiations were at once ended. Tallemant's pen was dipped in vitriol when he mentioned this man, and Tallemant was not alone in this. So many lampoons on the fellow from the hands of so many writers were published that he acquired the nickname "Maréchal des Lampons." Another family whom he did not admire was that of La Honville. "A good enough family, but there is no man on earth has such esteem for himself as

this lot has for each other. They waste the entire morning in sending their lackeys to one another for news of how each has passed the night." Tallemant had many and pertinent things to tell of the authors around him, and with much perspicuity picked out at least two whose fame has passed the confines of France. Blaise Pascal, he tells us, "was a chit of a boy who had invented a marvellous calculating machine." The "Provincial Letters" had appeared, but under another name. La Fontaine, in Tallemant's phrase, "is a promising youngster in letters and verse;" the "youngster" had yet to reveal his genius in his "Fables." We might quote for a week with interest, but with one more example we shall close the "Historiettes." Tallemant, in a comment on the verse of Racan, observed: "Apart from his verses, he had not even common sense. His face was that of a farmer. He stuttered, and was never able to pronounce his name, because, unfortunately, the 'r' and 'e' were the two worst letters in his mouth." All this is true; Racan was better known for his eccentricities than for his poems. But in his malice in this instance Tallemant was rather paltry. There is no harm in it, nor wit, nor humour, and it is needless. It served, however, to illustrate what Tallemant was capable of when his subject was of the nobility. Titles to him were so many riot acts. Among the wiser nobility he had many friends, whom he exempted from his contempt; of the rest he never said an untrue thing, but never said a good one. Remembering the class of men who were the courtiers of Louis XIV., and the great distinction made between a man who could show a coat-of-arms, though he lacked a coat on his back, and the best of the bourgeois, we may conceive that Tallemant's spite against the nobility was the "outcome of that very natural resentment raised in one who had a conscience to

spoil against that perpetual irritation caused by the endeavours of the nobility wantonly to humiliate the bourgeois." The end of it all, as class against class, culminated in the Revolution of 1789. Tallemant, bourgeois himself, wealthy and clever, was naturally jealous of the prerogatives given to the mere accident of birth when it was not accompanied by merit, and it was with something of complaisance that—man with a muck-rake—he scraped out the vices of the great and reduced their pride. To the same motive we may trace the prominence he gave to obscure families of worth, and the delight he took in tracing the origin of an escutcheon to a pig-sty. On this account the "Historiettes," on their appearance in print in 1835, were the subject alike of extravagant praise and equally extravagant censure. The time of their appearance was unfortunate, since criticism took on a political cast, and what was not for Louis-Philippe was for the silk-weavers and the secret societies whose members he had butchered for three days. This, too, was the year when Fieschi aimed at the King's life. So partisans of progress applauded Tallemant. They saw in his stories a kind of level applied to the high life of his day and reflecting on their own. Those in favour of the established order of things, on the other hand, saw nothing in Tallemant but the uprooting of the old social order and a debasement of the nobility and clergy. Both sides carried matters to a ridiculous position. Tallemant's stories pointed no moral, and to him politics were poison.

The gravest accusation against Tallemant is that his pen was far from chaste. His editors admitted that he had occasionally wiped his feet on decencies that should always be respected. Trustworthy men, they, however, scrupulously refrained from printing the few such passages, leaving those who are inquisitive enough to journey to Paris and read the original manuscript. Almost the whole of the stories are printed as written, and it may be urged that many of them are too cœrulean. In extenua-

tion we must recall the particular period, when vice was screened behind only the most diaphanous of veils and speech was more wanton than now. We must study our own authors—unexpurgated if we can get them—of the same or an earlier time; and we must remember that Tallemant wrote only for himself and such friends as might desire to read, descending from the more polished, more polite style intended for print, to the colloquial familiarity of the private letter. In that very familiarity indeed lives much of his charm. His own apologia by way of preface ran: "I propose to tell here the good and the ill without disguising the truth. I do so the more freely as I know these are the things suitable for all kinds of light, albeit they may not perhaps fail to be useful. I give them only to such friends as beg for them." If, therefore, anyone should not care for Tallemant's stories he need not "beg" for them. Should he do so, let him not "look the gift horse in the mouth," especially as Tallemant himself never courted criticism by offering his manuscript to public print.

In that century of innumerable personal revelations no writer has scandalised so delightfully or with so much joy. He has gathered his bits from everyone, and we profit. Without him much of the literary and social life behind the scenes of the most intellectual period of French history would have remained hidden, and the first "Salon" ever held would have lacked its reporter. Open Tallemant's book haphazard; there, as in Boswell's Johnson, you will find amusement if not something more. "A lover of antique scandal which taketh away the character and committeth *scandalum magnatum* against the nobility of the seventeenth century will find in this work an untouched treasure-house of curious anecdote for the accomplishment of his purpose." So said Scott of Pepys' Diary, and we repeat it of the "Historiettes" of Tallemant des Réaux, the Pepys of France.



SOME EARLY WELSH ROMANCES.

By JOHN DAVIES.

THE romances under notice are to be found in the "Mabinogion," and are commonly known as the "Four Branches of the Mabinogi," forming a cycle in themselves. Their origin is unknown, but they are anterior to the Arthurian Legend; thus of necessity they are *very* old. On the authority of Principal Rhys it is now generally conceded that a "Mabinog" is a technical term belonging to the Bardic system, and means a literary apprentice, and one who received instruction from a qualified Bard. "Mabinogi" meant the collection of things which formed the Mabinog's literary training, his stock-in-trade, so to say. From the word Mabinogi Lady Charlotte Guest coined "Mabinogion" in the plural sense.

These romances are distinguished by a wealth of imagery and magic, a polish of diction remarkable in its degree, and a knowledge and detail of colours which is most vivid. They offer much insight into the customs and history of the period, though it is evident they have somewhat overgrown their original form. Professor Anwyl says: "They seem to consist of fragments from various sagas more or less skilfully combined into a unity." How much in this direction and that of the diction is due to the redactors one cannot determine, yet the outcome is elegant and polished. Whether they be fairy-tale, nursery-tale or

pure story-telling I shall not argue, but as it is stated that "these four branches preserve the mythology of the Celts settled in Britain," I ask you to believe that it may not be all fairy-tale, but that deep mythological conceptions lie behind each picture. Says another scholar: "They are concerned with persons who, generally speaking, are treated as human beings, but who at the same time are credited with supernatural powers." But the mythological aspect is a vast subject, and the equation of the characters with those in other sagas cannot be attempted now. My object, then, is to offer a *resumé* of the four branches, and to point to some of the interesting features. Let me again refer to the vast amount of research which is being directed to Celtic literature; an ordinary layman is dependent to a great degree on the work of scholars, and it is somewhat disconcerting to find theory after theory vanishing in the keen light of criticism. Yet one may "gird up the loins" and take comfort in the reflection that even the giants have their difficulties. Here is the confession of a scholar speaking of early romance: "There is only one hero, or at the most two . . . and the main interest of the story is kept clear and not confused by side issues. Later on more characters are introduced; we follow the fortunes now of one knight, now of another; their adventures (generally with a strong family likeness to each other) cross and re-cross; the titular hero disappears, often for several sections of the romance, till in the tangle the reader becomes doubtful as to which knight the compiler designed specially to honour." Exactly!

For the purposes of this paper I shall accept the theory that Pryderi is the central figure of these romances. Pwyll, Prince of Dyfed, is the first Mabinogi. Pwyll is minded to go and hunt, and hies him to the fray with his companions and hounds. Whilst listening to his

hounds he heard the cry of other hounds, who presently have the stag down before them. Pwyll drives them away, setting his own upon it. A horseman appears upon a large, light-grey steed, who is much wroth at the discourtesy. To appease Arawn, King of Annwn (Hades), Pwyll agrees to take upon him the semblance of Arawn, to reside in his dominions for the space of one year, and to have the fairest lady he ever beheld as a companion; at the end of the year he undertakes to fight and rid the King of his deadly enemy Hafgan, another King of Annwn. "Be there," he said, "in my likeness, and with one stroke that thou givest him he shall no longer live, and if he ask thee to give him another, give it not, how much soever he may entreat thee, for when I did so he fought with me next day as well as ever before." Arawn engages to go to Pwyll's kingdom so that no one shall know "I am not thou." The fight is fought, Hafgan vanquished, and the two return to their original spheres. In token of the King's friendship Pwyll loses the title of Prince of Dyfed, and becomes Pwyll, Chief of Annwn, from that time forward.

The next part of the story relates of Pwyll's meeting with Rhiannon, whom after many adventures he marries. It was an interesting feature that in this and other marriages in these old romances the wedding presents were given *by* the couple, and not *to* them. In the third year after this wedding the nobles of the land deplored the fact that their lord was still without an heir, and sought him to take another wife. But Pwyll asks for grace a further twelve months, and by some dispensation, physical or magical, the necessary heir was forthcoming. But on the night of his birth he miraculously disappears. Although his mother had six women watchers, sleep overcame them. Upon awakening, and observing their loss, they kill the

cub of a stag-hound, rubbing the blood on the face and hands of Rhiannon, and laying the bones in front of her, asserting that she had devoured the babe. The nobles contend that she be put away, but Pwyll declines, suffering Rhiannon to offer penance. And the penance was that she should sit every day for seven years near unto a horse-block that was without the gate, and, relating the story to all who travelled that way, offer to carry them upon her back into the Court. It rarely happened that any would permit.

The scene changes to the house of Teirnyon Twryf Vliant, Lord of Gwent-is-Coed, "the best man in the world." He possessed a beautiful mare, which foaled every first of May, but none knew what became of the colt. Arming himself on one of these occasions, he determined to solve the secret, and after bringing the mare into the house, he stood admiring the colt, and lo he heard a great tumult, and a claw came through the window, clutching the colt by the mane. Teirnyon struck off the arm at the elbow; then arose a tumult and a wailing. He rushed out into the darkness, but saw nothing. Returning and arriving at his door, behold there was an infant boy in swaddling clothes, wrapped in a mantle of satin, the boy being very strong "for the age that he was of." Taking the babe to his childless wife, they agree to rear him, giving him the name of Gwri Wallt Euryn, "because his hair was as yellow as gold." He showed wonderful precociousness, reminding one of Cuchulainn, a notable figure in Irish Sagas.

Shortly after this Teirnyon and his wife learn of the troubles of Rhiannon and her sad penance, and, being struck by the strangeness of the disappearance of the royal babe and their fateful discovery, decide to take the boy to his parents, much to the relief of the mother, who

immediately declares: "There is indeed an end to my trouble;" and he is called "Pryderi," the meaning of which is anxiety. This recalls the name of Sir Tristram—the Welsh word for sorrow is *Trist*. This Pryderi is the supposed central figure of the romances. With the death of his father Pwyll, his succession to the dominions and marriage to Kieva this Mabinogi concludes.

The next story is "Branwen, the daughter of Llyr." It is full of new characters and scenes, and the connection between it and Pryderi is of the most meagre. It is, nevertheless, deeply interesting, and almost more significant in the mythological sense than the others. It speaks of Bran, the son of Llyr, who, according to the Triads, first brought Christianity to this country from Rome, and is ranged with the three founders and legislators of Britain. He is also the stem of one of the three great families of Welsh saints, and to him is attributed the building of Harlech Castle. He marries his sister Branwen to King Matholwch, of Ireland. When over suing for his wife an insult is put on him by Bran's half-brother; but peace is established, the wedding takes place, and they return to Ireland.

In the second year the insult is recalled, and Branwen, after being driven from the King's side, has to submit to cook for the family, with a further humiliation of a daily blow on the side of the ear from the butcher. No word of this cruelty travels to her relatives, and all means of communications are closed. But poor Branwen trains a starling to speak, which eventually carries the news home. Her people cross, and the most horrible slaughters ensue. The sequel is too long to enter upon. In this Mabinogi occur some of the most barbarous acts of cruelty, none such to be found in any other, and the suggestion is that of Danish influence. We are introduced to magic

cauldrons, into which dead men are cast, out of which they return in full vigour; cauldrons are often to be found in Celtic literature. Bran dies of a poisoned dart, but he has commanded seven of his knights to cut off his head. "And take you my head," said he, "and bear it even unto the White Mount in London, and bury it there with the face towards France. And a long time you will be upon the road. In Harlech you will be feasting seven years, the birds of Phiannon, singing unto you the while. And all the time the head will be to you as pleasant company as it ever was when on my body. And at Gwales, in Penvro, you will be four score years, and you may remain there, and the head with you uncorrupted, until you open the door that looks towards Aber Henvelen and towards Cornwall. And after you have opened that door there you may no longer tarry, set forth to London to bury the head and go straight forward." This charge they obeyed, having previously buried Branwen on the banks of the Alaw, who died of a broken heart because she was the cause of two islands being destroyed. The connecting link here is that Pryderi and Manawyddan, the brother of Bran, were two of the seven knights.

There is an extraordinary postscript, as it were, to this Mabinogi, that none were left in Ireland save five pregnant women in a cave, to whom in the same night were sons born. When they grew up and thought about wives, each took a wife of the mothers of their companions, and so governed and peopled the country, which they divided between them, and because of this partition are the five divisions of Ireland still so termed. Mr. John tells us: "The final incident shows that the tale in its extant form was not put together before the late eleventh century, as the Irish legend which it repeats is an antiquarian invention not older than the early part of that century."

The next Mabinogi is that of Manawyddan, the son of Llyr, and describes how, after the burying of the head of Bran, Pryderi shared his dominions with Manawyddan, giving his mother, Rhiannon, unto him as a wife. This romance is brimful of enchantment. A spell is cast upon the dominions of Pryderi because of the trick played by his father upon a rival to the hand of Rhiannon. The two knights with their wives return from London to Dyfed to find the Court empty and desolate. After feasting and hunting for two years they weary, and go into Lloegyr (England) to seek employment.

And they took themselves to making saddles . . . and as long as that workmanship could be had of Manawyddan neither saddle nor housing was bought of a saddler throughout all Hereford, till at length every one of the saddlers perceived that they were losing much of their gain, and that no man bought of them but him who could not get what he sought from Manawyddan. Then they assembled together and agree to slay him and his companions.

After receiving warning they go forth to another city and begin to make shields, and prospered in a similar manner, but at last the craftsmen agree to slay them.

In the next town they agree to make shoes, and in this respect we get a glimpse of the free trade doctrine of "free imports." "What craft shall we take?" said Manawyddan. "Whatsoever thou wilt that we know," said Pryderi. "Not so," he replied; "but let us take to making shoes, for there is not courage enough among cordwainers either to fight with us or to molest us." "I know nothing thereof," said Pryderi. "But I know," said Manawyddan, "and I will teach thee to stitch. We will not attempt to dress the leather, but we will buy it ready dressed and will make the shoes from it." Richard Cobden must have been the re-incarnated spirit of the dauntless

Manawyddan. But again they had to flee, and returned to their own country. The remainder of the story recounts the spell which is laid upon the land and through what agency it was removed.

The last of the Mabinogi is "Math, the son of Mathonwy" (the Celtic Zeus, as he is called). This is introduced as showing how Pryderi met with death. A nephew of Math, Gilfaethwy, falls in love with the virgin in whose lap Math laid his feet, and his brother Gwydion, a great minstrel, story-teller and magician, promises to aid him. He represents to Math that Pryderi, the son of Pwyll, is possessed of some small animals, and "their flesh is better than the flesh of oxen" (we call them pigs). Accompanied by his brother and ten others they bring them, after fascinating the Court of Pryderi with song and story. They leave a great host of exchange formed of fungus behind them, such as chargers, greyhounds and beautiful saddles. But Gwydion urged speed to his companions. "The illusion," said he, "will not last but from the one hour to the same to-morrow." This is the preliminary to a battle between the North and South, between the forces of Math and Pryderi. Thus is the plot worked out for luring Math away from his lap-holder, during which absence Gilfaethwy forcibly has his will of her. The battle takes place with much slaughter, and resolving itself into a duel between Pryderi and Gwydion, Pryderi loses his life. When Math returns and learns of the fate of his lap-holder he is sorely vexed, and with his wand changes the nephews first into deer, then hogs, finally wolves. They return at the end of each year in the semblance of the animals they bear, and always with issue.

There is much more of interest in the story; the testing of the virginity of Arianrod; she has to step over a magic wand, and gives birth to two boys. They are both

wonderful children. One dies young, struck by a blow from his uncle. The story is concerned henceforth with the life of the other, and Gwydion's magical powers are described, by which he overcomes the obstacles in the paths of the boy. The most beautiful portion is that in which Gwydion and Math, because of the destiny laid upon the youth by his mother, that he should never have a wife of the race that now inhabits the earth, "take the blossoms of the oak and the blossoms of the broom, and the blossoms of the meadow-sweet and produced from them a maiden, the fairest and most graceful that men ever saw. And they baptised her, and gave her the name of Blodeuwedd (Flowerface)."

There I must leave the stories. But there is one point I must refer to, and that is their clear conception of right and wrong. There is in the first Mabinogi an example of chastity which is truly marvellous. You will remember Pwyll takes on him the semblance of Arawn, and has a beautiful woman as a companion. After detailing his arrival, the story goes:—

The time came for them to go to bed. And he and the Queen went to bed; and when they came to the bed he turned his face to the wall and his back to her, and from then till the morrow he spake no word to her. The next day there was tenderness and affectionate converse between them. But whatsoever affection there was by day there was not a night to the end of the year different from the first night.

When Pwyll and Arawn return to their original spheres, Arawn also goes to bed. List to the story:—

The King went to bed, and his wife went to him. At once he began to converse with her. Now to this she had not been accustomed for a year, and she pondered over it. And long she brooded. And when this thought had gone he awoke. And he spoke to her twice and thrice,

but he got no answer from her. "Why," said he, "dost thou not speak to me?" "I tell thee," said she, "that for a year I have not said so much in this place." "What?" said he, "but we talked continually." "Mine be the shame," said she, for a year from last night there has been neither tenderness nor conversation between us, nor hast thou turned thy face towards me from the instant we entered the fold of the clothes." And he considered. "Good heavens," said he, "a man as firm and sure in his friendship as any have I found for a friend." And he said to his wife: "Lady, blame me not. God knows that I have neither slept nor lain with you for a year from last evening." And thereupon he explained the whole adventure to her.

Pwyll's reward, as we remember, was the friendship of Arawn and the possession of a more dignified title.

For an example of the unchaste it is sad that we must turn to Blodeuwedd (Flowerface). She is untrue to her husband, and by treachery and deceit like unto Delilah, gains the knowledge which results in the success of her lover. Retribution follows; she is changed into a bird, and because of her share and through fear of other birds, is never permitted to show her face in the daylight. "In the language of this present time she became an owl, and for this reason is the owl hateful unto all birds."

The book is full of examples of colour. I refer but to one or two. Pwyll's meeting of the hounds of Annwn:—

Then looked he at the colour of the dogs, staying not to look at the stag; and of all the hounds that he had seen in the world he had never seen any that were like unto these; for their hair was of a brilliant shining white, and their ears were red, and as the whiteness of their bodies shone so did the redness of their ears glisten.

Again his first sight of Rhiannon:—

And while he sat there they saw a lady on a pure white horse of large size, with a garment of shining gold around her.

I should also have been glad to refer to the game of "Badger in the bag."

These are the earliest specimens of Welsh romances, having no reference whatsoever to the Arthurian Legend. They belong to the days of Paganism—before the days of the Gospel. They are charged with sentiment, poetry, beautiful descriptions, especially of colour, and reveal the manner of royalty and nobility of those early days. Naturally we pride ourselves greatly upon our possessions, and are not much oppressed by the rumour that we may yet live to discover that after all they are not Welsh but Irish, or, further still, that neither are they Welsh or Irish, but Scandinavian. Whatever the future may have in store for us in that respect, it is self-evident that as they are they are charming and replete with meaning and wonder. May they live for ever.





ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

By J. H. BROCKLEHURST.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE was born in Belgravia on April 5th, 1837. He comes of Northumbrian stock, and with a view to accounting perhaps for his Gaelic leanings some emphasise the fact that his grandfather married a Polignac. He lived with his parents, until he went to Eton, alternately in the Isle of Wight and in the home of the paternal grandfather, part of the year being spent in the South, and the summer in the chillier North.

His youthful history is but that of thousands of well-ordered, respectable young Englishmen. At the age of twelve he was sent to Eton, and thence proceeded in 1856 to Balliol College, Oxford. He attained no great distinction at the University, and left it without a degree.

During a few weeks of travel in Italy he was introduced to Walter Savage Landor, who was living at Fiesole. He had read Landor's writings, and in later years paid him high tribute of praise in a long poem, under the title of "Song for the Centenary of Walter Savage Landor," with a dedication to Mrs. Lynn Linton. Swinburne says he has been fortunate in his friendships, and the poem is a noble, generous testimony to the worth of Landor, not

only as a writer but as a friend, "whose heart no fear but every grief might move,"

Name set for love apart,
Held lifelong in my heart,
Face like a father's toward my face inclined;
No gifts like thine are mine to give,
Who by thine own words bid thee hail, and live.

It was in 1862 that Dante Gabriel Rossetti lost his wife, and, struck with sorrow and remorse, he was unable to live in the house where she had died. He removed therefrom to Tudor House, No. 16, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea. The step was of great moment not only to himself, but to two others—George Meredith and Swinburne. Meredith and Rossetti were of the same age, and Swinburne about eight years their junior. Each enjoyed the privacy of their own sitting-room, and could receive visitors, but they dined together in the evenings. Rossetti dominated the little group. His was a powerful personality, and he seems to have been rather regardless of the wishes of others. Therefore such an arrangement did not last long, and Meredith was the first to withdraw. No new brotherhood arose from this friendship, as from the earlier acquaintance of Holman Hunt, Rossetti and Millais, but, nevertheless, its influence is to be traced in the work produced by Meredith and Swinburne at the time. The latter published "Faustine" in the *Spectator* of May 31st, 1862, and Meredith gave his great poem "Modern Love" to the world in the same year. The tone, colour and treatment of these two poems present many similarities to Rossetti's work, though if we pursued our investigation to the ultimate cause we should probably find the similarity in the output of the three men to be due to their common reading and interchange of ideas.

During this period Swinburne also made the acquaintance of William Morris, Burne-Jones, Whistler and one who has been his closest friend ever since, Theodore Watts-Dunton, the critic, poet and romancer. Thus is Swinburne connected with the celebrated P.R.B., and in an especial degree with its most prominent member, particularly on the literary side, Rossetti. Both men possess common characteristics. They have the same gorgeous effects, each is a supreme verbalist, each frequently writes as if for the mere sake of writing, without any particular end in view except for the mere sensuous delight of word music, that "concord of sweet sounds" which, as Landor expresses it,

There is delight in singing, though none hear
Beside the singer.

Undoubtedly, however, the greatest influence which has come into our poet's life has been that of Watts-Dunton. Since 1879, when they became inmates of The Pines, Putney, the closest personal intimacy has existed between the two men to the present time. James Douglas, biographer of Watts-Dunton, and writer of the article on Swinburne in Chambers' last edition of the "Cyclopædia of English Literature," notes that after the publication of "Eretheus" in 1876, "the romantic temperament re-conquered the poet's imagination and continues to maintain its ascendancy."

Turning to the bibliographical side of our subject, we find that Swinburne's first essay in the literary sphere was as editor of a short-lived College magazine, "Undergraduate Papers," and it is interesting to note a poetical contribution in No. 1 from the editor, entitled "Queen Iseult, Canto I," inasmuch as in one of his finest poems, if not the finest, "Tristram of Lyonesse," he returns to the same subject

again. The "Papers" were published between December, 1857, and April, 1858, when their career was ended. In 1860 "The Queen-Mother" and "Rosamond," two plays, were ushered into an unheeding world and bear witness for us that the young poet was pluming his wings and preparing himself for further flights.

Tennyson had already become famous. He had worn the bays for ten years that had fallen from the brows of him "that uttered nothing base;" "In Memoriam" had been published in the year of Wordsworth's death, "Maud" five years later, and in 1859, the year prior to Swinburne's entry into the field, the first four "Idylls of the King" had appeared. Browning had scarcely yet been recognised as a great poet, though some of his best work had already been done, "Men and Women" having been published in 1855, and, of course, "Paracelsus," "Pippa Passes" and "A Blot on the 'Scutcheon'" years before.

Swinburne has been a most prolific writer. Essays and studies in literature, dramas and poems have come unceasingly from his pen, and prove him to be a scholar and critic of the first rank, as well as a poet worthy to be enrolled in the list of England's great poets, which is no mean honour in a country so rich in great names. He has contributed to the "Encyclopædia Britannica" articles on Beaumont and Fletcher, Congreve, Keats, Landor and Marlowe, while elsewhere Blake, Shelley, Byron, Coleridge, Rossetti and William Morris, Matthew Arnold and Shakespeare have also been the subjects of his learned criticism and exposition.

It is the poems, however, which claim our attention in this paper. The collected, authoritative edition was published last year in six crown octavo volumes, well printed and well bound, making a fitting shrine for the

work of a great genius. We might recommend the publishers, if ever another edition is called for, to provide a complete index to the poems of the six volumes, and perhaps also a subject-matter index indicating, for example, the poems where Shakespeare and Victor Hugo or other features of interest are mentioned. At present we have only tables of contents to each volume, which leave much to be desired. Volume 1 contains the "Poems and Ballads" of 1866; Volume 2, "Songs before Sunrise," and "Songs of Two Nations," of 1871 and 1875 respectively; Volume 3, "Poems and Ballads" (second series of 1878, and third series of 1889), and the "Songs of the Springtide," of 1880; Volume 4, "Tristram of Lyonesse" (1882), "Tale of Balen" (1896), "Atalanta in Calydon" (1865) and "Eretheus" (1876). The chronological arrangement is here broken for the sake of including in one volume the dramatic poems and the Arthurian tales. In Volume 5 we have "Studies in Song" (1880), "A Century of Roundels" (1883), "The Heptalogia" (1880), and "Sonnets on English Dramatic Poets;" the last volume includes "A Midsummer Holiday" (1884), "Astrophel" (1894), "A Channel Passage" (1899), and the "other poems" which appeared with each of the three named on their first publication. A notable feature to the last volume is the nine prologues to some of the plays of the dramatic poets of Volume 5, and they rank among the best work of the volume wherein they are given.

It should be observed that many of the poems before being collected in their respective volumes had found a place in the pages of such journals as "The Spectator," "Cornhill Magazine," "Fortnightly Review," "Pall Mall Gazette," "Academy," and "The Athenæum."

It is said on good authority "by their works shall ye know them," and Swinburne's works testify that he has

a warm, friendly heart. Each of the aforementioned volumes is dedicated to a friend or hero, among whom we find the names of Edward Burne-Jones, Joseph Mazzini, Richard F. Burton, Edward John Trelawny, Wm. Bell Scott, Theodore Watts-Dunton, his mother, Walter Savage Landor, Christina G. Rossetti and William Morris; where aught is added beyond the name in the inscription the words are more than a mere passing compliment. They are the expression of a sincere and inward conviction, though his emotion runs away with his critical faculty at times, as in the rhapsodic gush of his sonnet on "William Shakespeare":—

Not if men's tongues and angels' all in one
Spake, might the word be said that might speak Thee.

Man, woman, child praise God for him.

All lutes, all harps, all viols, all flutes, all lyres,
Fall dumb before him ere one string suspires
All stars are angels; but the sun is God.

This wildly dithyrambic strain contrasts strangely with the sonnets of Arnold and Meredith on the same subject, but better this lyrical fervour than the wild unrestrained paradoxes and conceits of a Bernard Shaw. Admiration is ever to be preferred to mockery.

A remarkable feature of the poems before us is the large number arising from the desire to do honour to illustrious names in literature, art and politics. We have already mentioned Walter Savage Landor and the Elizabethan dramatists, and we also find the names of Victor Hugo, Walt Whitman, Théophile Gautier, Louis Kossuth, Sir Richard F. Burton, R. Wagner, Catullus, Thos. Carlyle, George Eliot, Dickens, Bismarck, Browning (whose death is commemorated in a sequence of sonnets), Burns (in an

ode), G. F. Watts, Alexandre Dumas and others less known to fame. The characteristic note is here, as in the dedications, ardent admiration, and if it be a fault we plead in extenuation that love and commendation gratify the noble mind, while envy and derision are but the joy of the mean and base. These poems are the tribute of a generous spirit to some of the world's greatest benefactors.

We have now passed rapidly in review the main biographical details of Swinburne's life, given a condensed bibliography of his poetical works, excluding the dramas, noted the character of his dedications, and the salient features of his poems on friends and fellow craftsmen. In so doing we have been concerned mainly with externals. We have, as it were, only examined the walls of the edifice and ascertained the periods of erection of different parts of the structure. Let us effect an entry and behold the interior, not as uncritical absorbed devotees, but with eyes open to see, and minds free from prejudice to judge, or, if we have our pre-conceptions, let them be with a bias in favour of him who has planned and wrought a great and goodly work, though blemishes here and there may exist.

This requires to be said, because Swinburne has for long been the victim of a misunderstanding. It has been well remarked that, "If 'Atalanta' made the poet Byronically famous, 'Poems and Ballads' made him Byronically infamous," and that "the excitement and outcry that ensued came very near producing an apoplexy among the critics." These early products of Swinburne's young genius were not all of the "fleshly" type, which raised the storm of indignation, and if we have "Laus Veneris," "Anactoria," "Faustine," and "Dolores," we have also "Itylus," "Hymn to Proserpine," "A Match," "To Victor Hugo," and a beautiful closing Dedication. The con-

troversy is long since dead, and we have only heard the feeble re-awakened echoes on the advent of the recent edition of the Poems. In our less sensitive age there has been no terrorising of publishers by the *Times* and no outburst of frenzied moralists.

We may be decadent, we may be saner and more generous, but whether we are better or worse morally now than in the mid-sixties it is not within our province to discuss and determine. We will merely content ourselves by remarking that after forty years Swinburne finds "nothing to regret, nothing to recant, nothing that he would wish to cancel, to alter or to unsay in any page he has ever laid before the reader." The fault, in the discredited poems, lies rather in the form than the spirit, and when you have misery and unrest depicted as the penalty of sin, the poem may become a moral lyric of the first order. We must remember, too, that Swinburne has given stern, strong expressions on the duty of doing justly and guiding our actions according to the laws of righteousness. Has he not written:—

But all the gods will, all they do, and we
Not all we would, yet somewhat; and one choice
We have, to live and do just deeds and die.

And again, in his most fervent strain, has he not sung:—

Far above all wars and gospels, all ebb and flow of time,
Lives the soul that speaks in silence, and makes mute earth
sublime.
Still for her, through years and ages be-blinded and be-
dinned,
Mazed with lightnings, crazed with thunders, life rides and
guides the wind.
Death may live or death may die, and the truth be light or
night;
Not for gain of heaven may man put away the rule of right.

It is sometimes said that Swinburne has been in advance of his time—not on the ethical side, is it to be understood, but in the character of his writing, its too great subjectivity, its intellectual and elusive character—thus seeking to explain his want of wider recognition. We might look further than this, however, and attribute it to his heterodoxy, his lack of sympathy with the religious tendencies of his time.

Wordsworth is known as the high-priest of Nature and prophet of humanity; Tennyson is the exponent of the doubt, faith, morals and theology of the mid-Victorian period; Browning is a glowing optimist, full of hope, with God over all, and with him life implies immortality. These men have expressed and led the ideas of their age, and their words strike responsive chords in the breasts of their countrymen.

Swinburne arouses antagonism by his seeming impiety and irreverence; and, in placing himself in opposition to the prevailing religious aspirations and beliefs, he alienates many whose word of recommendation would have largely increased his circle of readers and made him a greater power in the literary world than he is at present. The pulpit has had not a little to do with the making known of Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning, but Swinburne is outside the pale of its thought, and unproclaimed. For example, take such lines as:—

Thou art judged, O judge, and the sentence is gone forth
against Thee, O God.

Or,

Till Christ, by Paul cast out,
Return.

The first savours of unseemly presumption to nine-tenths of the people, and the second will be resented as grossly

untrue. Again, mark the contrast between the cold intellectuality of the following passage with the sublime spirituality of Wordsworth's statement, though they approximate here in their beliefs. Thus Swinburne:—

Therefore the God that ye make you is grievous, and gives
not aid,
Because it is but for your sake that the God of your making
is made;
Thou and I and he are not gods made men for a span,
But God, if a God there be, is the substance of man, which
is man.
Our lives are as pulses or pores of his manifold body and
breath:
As waves of his sea on the shores where birth is the beacon
of death.
We men, the multiform features of man, whatsoever we be,
Recreate him of whom we are creatures, and all we only
are he.
Not each man of all men is God, but God is the fruit of the
whole,
Indivisible spirit and blood, indiscernible body from soul.

And thus Wordsworth:—

The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness, and not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.

A reviewer has said that, "unlike Tennyson and Browning, Mr. Swinburne refuses to fortify his acceptance of death with any credulity of hope. He is content with death whatever death may be." This attitude may suit Mr. Swinburne, but not the majority of mankind, for such lack of precision in a matter which looms portentously big in men's minds, being concerned with his destiny, calls

forth no enthusiasm; in fact it results in absolute indifference. Tennyson had his doubts, was agnostic in spirit, but faith ever shone through, a beam in darkness which he trusted would sooner or later become the full-orbed sun of noonday. Commune with the friend who lived with God seemed not impossible for one brief hour to him. Swinburne can only speak of death as going down

To the empty weary house
Where no flesh is, nor beauty, nor swift eyes,
Nor sound of mouth nor might of hands and feet.

The world looks for poets and teachers whose creed is finally, whatever their gropings may have been, one of joyous promise, of permanent hope and holy faith, rather than for the poet whose utterances are pessimistic and strongly suggestive of certain atheistic leanings.

Swinburne's tone towards the commonly-accepted beliefs of his countrymen has been alluded to as that of "a second-rate free-thinker." I say nothing either for or against his expressed religious opinions, but simply note his theological tendencies and predilections wherein we may find a clue to his want of vogue. He is versatile, brilliant, unsurpassed in many respects. He has written much good, noble, imperishable verse, poetry as beautiful and ethereal often as that of Shelley and Keats, pure poetry in the highest sense of the term, and it is not always to the point to ask what is the poet's message, or has he a message? A poet may think so much of his message that he forgets the poetry, and becomes a dull preacher. Of Swinburne, however, it can truly be said that as yet he has not touched the heart of the nation in the same manner as his immediate predecessors, the three poets already mentioned, whose ideas have permeated the

very fibre of the thought of the nation, whose phrases are current coin.

If Swinburne has a message or a gospel it is the supremacy of man. He sees "the light of manhood rise in the twilight of the gods." In his "Hymn of Man," which he claims as the "birthsong of spiritual renascence," he writes: "Men perish, but man shall endure; lives die, but the life is not dead."

Thou art smitten, thou God, thou art smitten, thy death is
upon thee, O Lord,
And the love-song of earth as thou diest resounds through
the wind of her wings—
Glory to Man in the highest! for Man is the master of things.

It is a brave theme, and Swinburne is a bold fighter with the courage of his convictions. Th gospel is not new; in reality it is a poetic statement of the creed of the Positivist in its later developments. Comte's positivism in its broad sense became a spurious theology, a theology which denies a God and worships Humanity as the "New Superior Being." Swinburne may be regarded therefore as a Positivist Poet. Whether with prophetic insight into the mysteries which surround human development he has rightly discerned the religion of the future, time alone will show. At present the gospel of humanity as he proclaims it, is not in the ascendant. Perhaps its star will arise, and then will be the time of Swinburne's glory.

Let us now pass on to consider his poetry as a whole, and observe its chief characteristics. He belongs to the new romantic period in the later nineteenth century of English literature. He is pre-Raephaelite in sympathy, and his work naturally reflects his leanings. Wordsworth tells us that the principal object which he proposed to himself in his lyrical ballads was to choose incidents and situations from common life and throw over them a

certain colouring of the imagination, then to trace in them the primary laws of our nature. Swinburne has gone for his material to the myth and legend of past ages. He would, as it were, escape the problems of everyday life, and instead of "tracing the primary laws of nature" therein, he portrays the picturesque passion of mediæval romances; he rises to far higher flights when he seeks inspiration by the sea of his native land, in Italian fights for freedom, or in commune with the souls of the poets dead and gone.

Of the three great classes of poetry—the epic, lyric and dramatic—Swinburne has attempted the two latter, and his works, it must be allowed, take high rank in our literature. Whether he is greater in his lyric or dramatic work is a matter of opinion. He tells us in his "dedicatory epistle" of the collected poems that "his first, if not his strongest, ambition was to do something worth doing and not unworthy of a young countryman of Marlowe the teacher, and Webster the pupil, of Shakespeare in the line of work which those three poets had left as a possibly unattainable example for ambitious Englishmen." He has been told by authorities on such matters that any single one of his plays is worth all his lyric achievements, and also that whatever he may have done in any other field, as a dramatist he is of no account. It is not a point which we are called upon to settle, as we are engaged with his poems as collected. The dramas are to be published later.

We are in a unique position in criticising the poetical works of Swinburne, inasmuch as in the prefatory letter to which reference has already been made, we have the poet criticising himself and explaining his aims. The poems, which we have classified above under the general head of lyrics, are more definitely divided into lyrics, elegies,

sonnets and odes, though the title of ode, to use Swinburne's own words, may more properly and fairly be so extended as to cover all lyrical poems in stanzas or couplets. The epic or narrative poem he has never felt the same impulse to attempt as with regard to his other work. His only narrative poem is "The Tale of Balen." Swinburne is often spoken of as a great metrist, and in reading his preface it is forced upon one again and again the stress he lays upon form. With regard to "The Tale of Balen," he writes that the form was chosen as a test of the truth of his conviction that such work would be done better on the straightest and the strictest principles of verse than on the lower and more slippery lines of mediæval or modern improvisation, and he believes that "in such a metre as was chosen and re-fashioned for this poem it is possible to give some sense of the rage and rapture of battle." Of the story itself he says there is no episode in the cycle of Arthurian romance more genuinely Homeric in its sublime simplicity and its pathetic sublimity of submission to the martyrdom of fate than that which he has reproduced rather than recast in "The Tale of Balen." It was dedicated to his mother on March 24th, 1896:—

Since the old wild tale, made new, found grace
When half sung through before your face
It needs must live a springtide space,
While April suns grow strong.

Of course, he at once challenges comparison with Tennyson's "Balin and Balan" in the *Idylls*. Swinburne's metre is adapted to the story told, and gives something of dignity, as well as facility, to the narrative. There is a vigour of movement which is lacking in Tennyson's more irregular verse. That Swinburne chose well we have only need to

instance the fight between the two brothers, or, say, the two following stanzas :—

But Balen's spear through Launceor's shield
 Clove as a ploughshare cleaves the field,
 And pierced the hauberk triple-steeld,
 That horse with horseman stricken reeled,
 And as a storm-breached rock falls, fell,
 And Balen turned his horse again
 And wist not yet his foe was slain,
 And saw him dead that sought his bane,
 And wrought and fared not well.

Then thundered all the awakening field
 With clash of hosts that clashed and reeled,
 Banner to banner, shield to shield,
 And spear to splintering spear-shaft, steeld
 As heart against high heart of man,
 As hope against high hope of knight
 To pluck the crest and crown the fight
 For blessing given or ban.

Allied to "The Tale of Balen" is that of "Tristram of Lyonesse," written in heroic couplets. It contains some of the finest work Swinburne has done in narrative, description or songs. It is full of beauty, tenderness and power. His poetic inspiration is at its highest in a succession of dramatic scenes, for it is not thrown into the form of continuous narrative. He once more tells us the ever-fresh and deathless legend of "Tristram and Iseult," though he follows a different version from Tennyson in "The Last Tournament."

In the same volume as the two preceding poems are the "Atalanta" of 1865 and "Erectheus" of 1876. These are two experiments, and stand quite apart from the bulk of Swinburne's work, being attempts to reproduce, in English in some degree, the likeness of a Greek tragedy. The same thing had been done before by a William Mason (1724—1797), author of "Caractacus," and Arnold, in

1858, in "Merope." Swinburne, however, hoped when he wrote "Atalanta" to render his tragedy with something more of the true poetic life and charm of the Greek than could be expected of the writers named. He does not consider that he achieved the success he aimed at. One is tempted to dwell on these two productions, particularly "Atalanta," with its variety of form and movement, its tragedy and pathos, but we cannot stay, much as we might desire, once more to linger over its scenes and hear again its grand choruses. Swinburne lays great importance upon the ode as a form of poetic expression, and, like Dryden, Keats, Coleridge and Wordsworth, has tried his powers in this direction. He considers "the Greek form, with its regular arrangement of turn, return and after-song, is not to be imitated because it is Greek, but to be adopted because it is best, the very best as a rule, that could be imagined for the lyrical expression of the thing conceived or lyrical aspiration towards the thing imagined." He further remarks that it is strange, our language being what it is, that our literature should not be richer in examples of the higher kind of ode. Fully alive to what Coleridge has done in this direction, he is not dismayed, nor need he be, for he has shown himself a master of the technique of his art, and has infused into his productions the emotional quality without which pure lyrical poetry is impossible.

We may rightly classify as odes his "Hymn to Proserpine," and "Hymn of Man," the stanzas in the first volume to Victor Hugo, the "Ode on the Insurrection in Candia," and the "Armada." Besides these we have "Athens" following strictly on the lines of the Pindaric ode, with strophe, antistrophe, and epode clearly marked and defined. It is to the "Armada" and "Athens" odes that he would appeal for the determination of his position

as a lyric poet. There are others of his poems equally as good for the purpose, though he could not have chosen better.

The true test of lyric poetry, whether it take the form of elegy, sonnet, ode, song, psalm or hymn, is, how far has the poet surrendered himself to his personal emotions in the relation of his impressions and experiences. It is the poetry of sentiment. The expression of the thought must be pervaded with emotion, and not necessarily emotion "recollected in tranquility," but thrown off at white heat, when the breath of heaven has made the heart to glow. And truly Swinburne is at his best in the lyric. There are lyrics by the dozen, enough to make a name for him, apart from his other productions, and many will find a place in any future anthology. Childhood, love, the strivings of the soul the story of men and nations, find him themes whereon to let his imagination play, and gloriously does he give rein to his fancy, in melodious and perfect work. The two odes submitted to our judgment are of moderate length; they are lyrics long drawn out, but the lyric strain is well sustained.

It would be an easy task to surfeit ourselves with quotations illustrative of our poet's power in this direction from either "Athens" or "The Armada," to say nothing of the many gems scattered through the six volumes. Great as are either of the poems, that on "Athens" is the more stately and elegant, while "The Armada" is in a bold, rapturous vein, more eloquent and rugged, as befits a poem glorifying England and Englishmen. "Athens" is to Swinburne as a goddess, and she receives his whole-hearted adoration.

All the world is sweeter, if the Athenian violet quicken;
All the world is brighter if the Athenian sun return;
All things foul on earth wax fainter, by that sun's light
stricken:
All ill growths are withered, where those fragrant flowers
burn.

And from the third and concluding epode let us take the following:—

Athens, first of all earth's kindred, many-tongued and many-
kinned,
Had the sea to friend and comfort, and for kinsman had the
wind.

.

Fair as Athens then with foot upon her foeman's front, and
strong
Even as Athens for redemption of the world from sovereign
wrong,
Like as Athens crowned she stood before the sun with
crowning song.
All the world is theirs with whom is freedom: first of all the
free,
Blest are they whom song has crowned and clothed with
blessing: these as we,
These alone have part in spirit with the sun that crowns the
sea.

We must pass by the "Roundels," and the songs of childhood, in which his tenderness contrasts strangely with his fierce political outbursts and invective (for Swinburne is a good lover and a good hater), nor will space permit us to dwell upon the sonnets and poetic prologues, but "The Heptalogia" we cannot afford to leave untouched. In his notable preface Mr. Swinburne takes upon himself the rôle of critic of his own work. In "The Heptalogia" he has gone a step further and parodied himself. To give the work its full title it is known as "Heptalogia, or the Seven against Sense, a Cap with Seven Bells." Except in pirated American editions this work has been unobtainable until the present issue of the collected poems.

Parody is generally looked upon as an ignoble art, and is the special province in the realm of verse of the undergraduate in his attempt to develop a sense of humour or

to express, in his own quaint way, his admiration for his favourite author. Swinburne, perhaps conscious of his lack of humour in his more ambitious undertakings, for once has unbent. Hence these fifty pages of imitative rhymes in the comic vein, with the ludicrous dissimilarity from the original treatment of the subject decreed by the laws of parody.

We should note, in passing, that he himself has been subjected to this burlesque treatment. Lewis Carroll and Kipling have given their attention to "Atalanta;" a Cambridge undergraduate, Arthur Clement Hilton, in "Octopus," gives a skit on "Dolores;" while Barry Pain, in his "Poets at Tea," tells us how Swinburne talks and lets his tea go cold.

Swinburne, whose command of language and metre is so great, is well equipped for the work he took in hand when he donned the cap and bells. The parodies are full of merriment and sparkling witticisms, and with his fine ear and obvious powers of mimicry he has given us some incomparable work in parody. We have "The Higher Pantheism in a Nutshell," after Tennyson; then follows "John Jones' Wife," after Browning's "James Lees' Wife;" "The Poet and the Woodlouse," and "The Person of the House," hitting off respectively Mrs. Browning and Coventry Patmore; and in "Last Words of a Seventh-rate Poet," that brilliant amateur in the poetic line "Owen Meredith," is justly caricatured, the poem furnishing theme for the parody being "Last Words of a Sensitive Second-rate Poet." Rossetti is disposed of in a sonnet, as you would expect, though sonnets do not lend themselves to parody, and he completes the sacred number with his "Nephelidia," revelling with almost boyish delight in alliteration, and his own idiosyncrasies of style and metre. Reverence is not a strongly pronounced quality of Mr.

Swinburne's genius, and his first-mentioned parody, clever though it be, gravitates towards profaneness in more than one couplet. He has caught the true Tennysonian ring and swing, as is seen in the following:—

Parallel all things are: yet many of them are askew:
You are certainly I: but certainly I am not you.

Springs the rock from the plain, shoots the stream from the
rock:

Cocks exist for the hen: but hens exist for the cock.

God, whom we see not, is: and God, who is not, we see:
Fiddle we know is diddle: and diddle we take it, is dee.

We all know Browning's little weaknesses, his love of the grotesque and insignificant details, his ingenious rhyming and puzzling sentences. "John Jones's Wife," divided into parts after the manner of its prototype, is replete with the happiest resemblances to the mannerisms of Browning; but if we had to decide upon the best of the parodies we should award the palm to the "Last Words of a Seventh-rate Poet." Poems and pills, metres and morals, woman, drugs, beetles, slugs by their very heterogeneity and strange juxtaposition titillate the comic spirit, appeal to our sense of humour and enkindle laughter. A definition of a poet in this *jeu d'esprit* is worth recalling:

For a poet, Bill, is a blossom, a bird, a billow, a breeze,
A kind of creature that moves among men as a wind among
trees.

Of how the speaker goes on to claim as his own the work of Milton, Shakespeare, Gray, Coleridge, Scott, Tennyson, Hood and Byron we must not pause to consider, but bring this brief survey of these interesting performances to an

end with four lines from "Nephelidia" to bear witness to our poet's power of self-imitation:—

Blank is the book of his bounty beholden of old, and its
binding is blacker than blue:

Out of blue into black is the scheme of the skies, and their
dews are the wine of the bloodshed of things;

Till the darkling desire of delight shall be free as a fawn
that is freed from the fangs that pursue her,

Till the heart-beats of hell shall be hushed by a hymn from
the hunt that has harried the kennel of kings.

Alliteration has been called the "special chord of Swinburne's lyre," assuring him of a unique place among our English poets. The alliterative character of the foregoing indicates this prominent characteristic of Swinburne's poetry. He accentuates, over-emphasises it here, purposely as it were, to let us see that he knows all about it. It is a splendid example of the artificiality of verse where alliteration is too obtrusive, and how it clogs the metre instead of helping the swing. The value of alliteration in English poetry is freely admitted, and our most finished verse contains numerous exquisite examples. United with an appropriate alternation and adaptation of vowel sounds to give melodiousness along with the alliterative stress we obtain some of our finest metrical effects. Tennyson is the king in this domain, and Swinburne would run him very close for the throne were it not that he, much oftener than Tennyson, carries the alliteration to excess. Let us take a few typical examples of his best efforts:—

The loveliness of laughing love that lives
On lips of little children.

Child of my sunlight and the sea, from birth,
A fosterling and a fugitive on earth.

Then in the first chorus of "Atalanta" we find:—

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The day dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;
And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

Also, in "Anactoria":—

On each high hill
Clear air and wind, and under in clamorous vales
Fierce noises of the fiery nightingales,
Buds burning in the sudden spring-like fire,
The wan washed sand and the waves' vain desire.

This last is a fine example of the skill of Swinburne, not alone in alliteration, but in the manipulation of the vowel sounds; the hill, the vales, and sea, the birds and the trees are vividly presented to us as the poet saw them, sad, joyous or lonely, not alone by the aid of the descriptive words but by the mental effect of the musical arrangement of the vowels and the pulse-beat of the measure, which, when well executed bespeak high poetical skill.

If we were engaged in a discussion as to the formative influences which have operated upon Mr. Swinburne, we should have to consider the French Baudelaire—in the earlier poetry especially—Victor Hugo, and, in English literature, our authorised version of the Hebrew Scriptures. It has been said, in fact, that it would not be difficult to trace the course of his reading by the work which he was doing at particular periods in his literary career. Of his familiarity with the Bible we have abundant evidence in the scriptural sentences which he has paraphrased in many of his poems, and there can be little doubt that this

familiarity has had a great effect upon his style. We see it in such poems as "Blessed among Women," "The Halt before Rome," "A Watch in the Night," "Aholibah," but more especially in "Super Flumina Babylonis," where, following the Prayer Book version of the 137th Psalm, he opens with a fine stanza illustrating perfectly the combination of alliterative and vowel effects, as well as his fine sense of right rhythm to produce the desired mournfulness and pathos:—

By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept,
 Remembering thee,
 That for ages of agony hast endured and slept,
 And wouldst not see.

One does not read Swinburne long without discovering that he has an exalted passion for the sea. He by no means neglects other forms and objects of the poet's goddess, Nature. In "Loch Torridon" we have a unique portrayal of the contrast and concord between night and day. He also reveals to us the beauties of the sunset and moonlight, or the solitude of the woods, and, as he puts it, "the splendid oppression of nature at noon which found utterance of old in such words of such singular and everlasting significance as panic and nympholepsy."

Mr. George Milner, in a recent paper, eloquently and forcibly insisted upon the human and personal element to be found in the Nature poetry of Wordsworth, and Swinburne is in fullest accord with him, for he has written that to avoid the charge of dullness, premeditated and formally descriptive poetry "must make felt and keep perceptible this personal note if the poem is to have life in it or even the right to live." Knowing this, and so fully realising its importance, we may expect to find it in his descriptive poetry, and the more we fix our minds upon it the more apparent does it become.

With regard to the sea, we might almost say that Swinburne has made it his own great subject, although we are not unmindful of what Byron and Kipling have done in the same line. His poetry is full of allusions to the sea, and among the poems more particularly devoted to it are "In the Bay," "In Guernsey," "Off Shore," "By the North Sea," "A Channel Passage," and some lengthy descriptive portions of "Tristram of Lyonesse."

Undoubtedly he has been influenced herein by his great hero, Victor Hugo, one whom he has honoured in at least six poems, though Swinburne is more of a rival than a pupil. Hugo shows nature in her marine aspects, hostile and in conflict with man. Swinburne does not always view her thus. The two poets are more at one in associating the idea of death inseparably with the sea, and with Swinburne this idea is recurrent and all pervasive. He is impressed with the immensity and mystery of the ocean. It is full of suggestion and memories, both sad and joyful. He has described it in all its moods, now murmuring peacefully in some sunlit bay wooing him to lave his limbs in its dancing wavelets, now illumined by phosphorescent gleams, now lashed into fury by the tempest, revealing

Such glory, such terror, such passion as lighten and harrow
the far fierce East,

when

The joys of the lightnings, the songs of the thunders, the
strong seas' labour and rage,
Were token and signs of the war that is life and is joy
for the soul to wage.

Truly with him the sea is the most inspiring spectacle in Nature. It fills him with rapturous emotion, which is crystallised in a rhythmic flow of words surcharged with

that "natural magic" that marks the highest poetry, and whereby the ecstasy and delight are communicated to the reader in fullest measure. In her darker and sterner moods the sea may remind him of her cruelty and remorselessness, but it is to her that he turns for solace, and to escape the carking cares of life, as not he alone among the poets has done. She is then "the great sweet mother, mother and lover of men," and thus does he sing of her in "In Guernsey," as he surveys "the heavenly bay fringed round with cliffs and moors":—

The whole world's heart is uplifted and knows not wrong;
 The whole world's life is a chant to the sea-tide's chorus;
 Are we not as waves of the water, as notes of the song?
 Like children unworn of the passions and toils that wore us,
 We breast for a season the breadth of the seas that throng,
 Rejoicing as they, to be borne as of old they bore us
 Across and along.

Or, to represent the darker side, let us take one verse from
 "The Triumph of Time":—

Fair mother, fed with the lives of men,
 Thou art subtle and cruel of heart, men say.
 Thou hast taken and shalt not render again;
 Thou art full of thy dead and cold as they.
 But death is the worst that comes of thee;
 Thou art fed with our dead, O mother, O sea,
 But when hast thou fed on our hearts? or when,
 Having given us love, hast thou taken away?

But we must draw this imperfect and superficial survey to a close.

Swinburne with such an abundance of brilliant work behind him would furnish subject-matter for many papers. Poems like "Genesis," "Hertha," so full of subtleties and mysticism, "A Nympholept," "Hawthorne Tide," "The High Oaks" and "A Channel Passage," with their raptures and their meditations, contain poetry worth the

closest study, poetry at once fired by the lyric impulse, deeply emotional and profound. If we turn from these to his "Songs before Sunrise," and "Songs of Two Nations" we know we are in the presence of one with a passion for freedom, and one who can communicate it to others through noble impassioned verses. He is irresistible. He reveals his high sense of human destiny and withers with his scorn all who would stay the onward progress of man. He is virile and strong. There is nothing of the decadent spirit here. Life is superbly heroic and admirable.

While speaking thus, we ought not to be unmindful of certain defects in his work. Nature has not yet made the perfect poet. He fails, with the exception already made, in humour. We cannot always be on the mountain-top in "breathless bliss," or live in ecstasy in the isles of fancy, and we would that our poet more frequently gave us a glimpse of the less serious side of life and made us laugh or smile.

His tricks of redundance and reiteration may tickle the ear by the jugglery of words, but they smack of affectation and do not always make for clearance, as in:—

"O sole delight of my desire, O sole desire of my delight."

In common with Rossetti, he has a great love for refrains and symbolical repetitions, and the poems where these occur cannot be classed among his best efforts. Again, it must be said that sometimes Swinburne's work presents us with specimens of what has been called "nebulous poetry." The phrase is sufficiently explicit without defining it further, and is just criticism, for in the poem "The Year of the Rose" the coiner of the phrase discovered a stanza that could be read either backwards or forwards, and yet it would be difficult to determine which was the more perspicuous of the two renderings.

Swinburne has a marvellous facility. We all know Tennyson revised much, and other people likewise, but, on the authority of the *Athenæum* reviewer, who seems to speak as one who knows, we learn that Swinburne's poetry is polished and perfected in his mind before it is put on paper, and when it is put on paper it is done. Yet his poetry does not lack spontaneity. Rather does it seem to have been struck off in the heat of the moment, so intense is the emotional ardour and so complete the apparent self-abandonment. He has surpassing imaginative power and inexhaustible resourcefulness in metre, which make him a master of poetic vision and poetic speech. How his smooth, fluent lines, jewelled o'er with apt metaphor and felicitous phrase, captivate our ears and gratify the sense of beauty and rhythm! He is "an earth-born dreamer," whose spirit, "kindled with breathless bliss," sets our soul aflame and thrills us with "divinest poesy." He is a poet of Nature, and of Man as the culmination of Nature's handiwork. He sings the song in his own way; he has written it from his own standpoint, and whatever views we may take of the latter we must admit that he yet uplifts man and conceives for him in the future moral grandeur not yet attained. In it he touches the springs of deep enduring universal emotion, and his song for that reason will live and be sung in the years to come.



LIBER DE OCULO MORALI.

By WILLIAM E. A. AXON.

THE Moss Side Public Library, Manchester, possesses a copy of "*Pithsanus: Liber de Oculo Morali*" in a modern binding with a lettering in which the book is assigned to the press of Sorg in the year 1472. That it was printed by Sorg seems clear, but the above date is probably too early. His first dated volume is of 1475, and the type is the same as that of the so-called *Pithsanus*. Anthony Sorg, of Augsburg, printed two editions of this book, and they can be discriminated from each other, as one has thirty-eight and the other forty lines of text to the full page. In the first the index precedes and in the latter follows the text. The British Museum has a copy of each. The thirty-eight line edition is assigned, with a query, to the year 1475, and it consists of sixty-one leaves. The two editions are 9426—9427 in Hain-Copinger, and 1659—1660 in Proctor's Index to Early Printed Books in the British Museum. That the edition is early may be inferred from the absence of folio-numbers and of signatures. In the Moss Side copy signatures are supplied in MS., and there are also some marginal annotations. Dr. Copinger gives a collation: a 8, b 10, c 8, d 10, e 10, f 10, g 4=60. In the Moss Side exemplar there are no signatures for the index, but, beginning with the text, they run: a 10, b 7, c 10, d 10, e 10, f 6, which, with 7 leaves of index=60.

The index is notable in its way. It is compiled to the honour of Christ, of the Virgin, and the entire court of Heaven by "Frater Mathias de Wienna, ordinis beate dei genitricis Marie de Monte Carmel, sacre theologie lector." He clearly understood the essentials of good indexing, and begins by explaining the method of his references, which are precise in a praiseworthy degree. Thus the first entry tells us that the author's view that "abstinencia studentibus est necessaria" is expounded towards the end of the first section of the eleventh chapter; his notion that "Mulieris oculi tela sunt impudicie" is, with other unflattering opinions, to be found all through the eighth chapter. It is strictly an index of topics and not of persons, though some famous names occur in the text. The indexer (Matthias Farinator) was a Carmelite friar, of Vienna, who compiled, at the request of Pope John XXII., an ethical work arranged alphabetically in seventy-two chapters, and entitled "Lumen animae fidelis." He was also the author of "Exempla naturam," and other books on science, as science was understood in the Middle Ages. For the purpose he had in view his index is excellent. So much for the index. We now turn to the work itself.

The opening words of the text are: 'Johannis Pithsani archiepi Canthuariensis, ordinis fratrum minorum liber de oculo morali foeliciter incipit.' Pithsan is the compositor's transmogrification of Peckham, to whom the tract has been attributed. At least two out of the seven letters agree. It has also been attributed to the learned Grossteste, Bishop of Lincoln. Dr. H. R. Luard, in his edition of Grossteste's Letters (p. xi.), has a note in which he apparently disclaims the Bishop's authorship, and assigns the book to Peckham. It has also been ascribed to Thomas Wallensis, to Joannes Gualensis, to Raymond

Jordan, and to Petrus Lemovacensis.¹ The claim of Pierre de Limoges is apparently that having the best authority.² M. B. Haureau gives his real name as Pierre de la Sepieyra, and he was a Canon of Evreux. His books continued to be read down to the seventeenth century, for there were several printed editions, of which the latest appeared in 1656.³

Of Pierre de Limoges we know little, except that he twice declined a bishopric. Some of his sermons remain in the French Bibliothèque Nationale.⁴ He was born at Donzenac, had a great reputation when Canon of Evreux, was offered the bishopric of Albi by the Pope, but declined it, and was elected Bishop of Limoges by the Chapter of that Cathedral in 1294, but again declined to take the episcopal office, and died in 1306 at Blaye. He was the donor of one hundred and twenty volumes to the Sorbonne—a magnificent gift in the fourteenth century. He is also said to have had some reputation as an astrologer. The plan of the "Liber de Oculo Morali" is simple. The author describes the physical characteristics of the eye, and from each deduces certain moral considerations. His physiology and his ethics are alike the commonplaces of the age in which he lived—a time when originality was scarcely considered a literary virtue. What he wrote was, when he wrote it, science, but some of it is now only folklore. Thus on the last page of the book we are told of a bird called caladrius which is entirely white in colour. When the caladrius is brought to a sick person, if he look

1. See Tanner, Bale (including Dr. Poole's edition in the *Anecdota Oxoniensis*), and Mr. A. G. Little's *Initia Operum Latinorum* (Manchester, 1904). The last named is a capital addition to the books of reference on mediæval literature.

2. Notice et extraits de quelques MSS. Latins, vi. p. 134.

3. Histoire Littéraire de la France, t. xxv. 194, t. xxvi. 464.

4. Histoire Littéraire de la France, t. xxvi. 467.

steadily in the face of the invalid he will recover, but if the bird turns its head away it is a sign of impending death. Here I am tempted to make a digression.

Readers of Kingsley's "Westward Ho!" will remember the bird with the white breast seen by Master John Oxenham, that brave, swaggering adventurer of Francis Drake's. "That bird," said the mother of Amyas Leigh, "has been seen for generations before the death of any of his family." This may have come to Kingsley as a bit of the traditional folklore of Devonshire, but the fatal white bird of the Oxenhams found its way into literature in the seventeenth century. James Howell, in his "Familiar Letters," tells us:—

As I passed by St. Dunstons in Fleet Street the other Saturday I stepped into a lapidary or stone-cutter's shop to treat with the master for a stone to be put up upon my father's tomb; and casting my eyes up and down, I might spy a huge marble with a large inscription upon it, which was thus to my best remembrance:—

"Here lies John Oxenham, a goodly young man, in whose chamber, as he was struggling with the pangs of death, a bird with a white breast was seen fluttering about his bed, and so vanished.

"Here lies also Mary Oxenham, the sister of the said John, who died the next day, and the same apparition was seen in the room."

Then another is spoke of. Then

"Here lies hard by James Oxenham, the son of the said John, who died a child in his cradle a little after, and such a bird was seen fluttering about his head a little before he expired, which vanished afterwards."

.

To all these be divers witnesses, both squires and ladies, whose names are engraven upon the stone. This stone is to be sent to a town hard by Exeter, where this happened.

Westminster, 3 July, 1632.

There have been various efforts in *Notes and Queries*

to ascertain the locality of this remarkable monument. No reliance is to be placed upon the dates attached by Howell to his letters. A pamphlet published in 1641 names "the apparition of a bird with a white breast hovering over the deathbeds of some children of Mr. James Oxenham, of Sale Monachorum, in September, 1635, and that a similar apparition was seen at the death of Grace Oxenham in 1618, and that a monument had been erected in memory of the event. But nothing of the kind has been found at Sale Monachorum, nor at South Tawton, where Grace Oxenham was buried in 1618. The white bird is said to have come again on several occasions, the latest recorded presaging the death of Mr. G. N. Oxenham in 1873.¹

The White Bird of the Oxenhams recalls to memory a wonderful fowl mentioned by writers of the Middle Ages, who generally give as their authority "Physiologus." This venerable book is cited by the Anglo-Norman poet, Philippe de Thaun, from whose "Livre des Creatures" we obtain some information concerning this prophetic fowl. Mr. Thomas Wright, who has printed de Thaun's poem in his "Popular Treatises on Science written during the Middle Ages" (London, 1841) says that the "Physiologus" quoted by Philippe is not that of Thetbaldus or Hildebert. "Kaladre" is white, and is shaped like a thrush. It ought to be in the court of a king—apparently because of its power of presaging death. When a sick man is brought before it, if his disease is mortal the caladrius will not deign to look at him. The wonder is that the bird was ever persuaded to look at any sick person, for Philippe continues: "If it will look at him know very well for

1. The Oxenham Death Omen was the subject of an elaborate paper which Mr. R. W. Cotton read before the Devonshire Association in July, 1882.

truth that by its look it takes all the disease to itself and the man recovers." The caladrius is to the pious poet an emblem of the Son of Mary. He further tells us that in the book of Deuteronomy the eating of the caladrius is forbidden. Accordingly in the Vulgate we find the charadrius mentioned (Deut. xiv. 18). This is the charadrius of the Septuagint, which word in the Douay version is not translated but transcribed. Charles Thomson, in his version of the Septuagint, simply uses the Latin form charadrius. The Wycliff version of 1388 has caladrie, whilst that of 1382 has the word jay. The authorised version renders the Hebrew anaphah by "heron." In Bagster's edition of the Septuagint diver and heron are given as alternatives. None of these birds correspond physically to the description of the mediæval caladrius. The superstition at least in a modified form is Greek, and will be found in the "Symphosais" of Plutarch (lib. vi. 7, ii. 9). That great moralist tells us that persons suffering from jaundice are cured by looking at the charadrios. The bird, he says, is of that nature as to receive the disease in the effluvium that flows out from the eyes of the patient. The charadrios will not look upon a jaundiced person, not from any wish to prevent a cure, but because the emanations from the sick person hurt him. Aelian gives a similar account (N.A. 17, 13). Pliny tells us that there is a bird called *Icterus* (= yellow or jaundice), and if the patient looks at it he will be cured, and the bird will die (N.H. xxx. 28). He further tells us that it is the same bird called in Latin *Galgulus*, which has been identified with the witwall. The charadrios has been identified with the stone-curlew or thick-kneed bustard (*Charadrius Edicnemus*). Evidently the name has been used for more than one bird.

The fame of the caladrius survived to the end of the

Elizabethan period. Robert Chester, whose "Love's Martyr" appeared in 1601, says:—

The snow-like colour'd bird, Caladrius,
Hath this inestimable natural prosperitie,
If any man in sicknesse dangerous,
Hopes of his health to have recoverie,
This bird will always looke with chearefull glance,
If otherwise, sad is his countenance.

Their exact position in the family pedigree may be difficult to define, but the white-breasted bird of the Oxenhams and the snow-white caladrius endowed with the power of prophesying life or death are evidently of near kin in the world of myths.

To return to the "Liber de Oculi Morali." The author quotes Seneca, Aristotle, Claudian, Horace, Juvenal and others. Indeed a list of authors long enough for a mediæval library might be extracted from his references. The Biblical quotations are especially numerous. He is more interesting when he thinks his own thoughts and speaks his own words—if, indeed, he ever does so. He reproaches the prelates with avarice, and regards their great dignities as having corrupted their morals. On the students at Paris he is also severe. So that they may not be accused when they go back to their own country of having done nothing, they manufacture big volumes "sur des peaux des veaux, with wide margins, and they bind them in red leather." Of such a student he has a story (Cap. xi.). Returning home with a great quantity of these, the pack-horse that was carrying them fell into the water, and they were all lost. On which another scholar, following on foot, poor in books, but rich in knowledge, made this epigram:—

Cordi non chartae
Tradas quae noveris arte,
Ut si charta cadat,
Tecum sapientia vadat.

This epigram besides its obvious moral, shows that a man may be a good scholar without being a good poet.

The author tells an anecdote (Cap. vi.) of the famous Alain de Lille, who remained poor whilst his scholars became rich and attained to great positions. But Alain preferred the dignity of scholarship and the treasures of the mind to precedence in courts and the heaping up of riches, and to one of his pupils he remarked, "He is not great who is a bishop, but he who is a good scholar. By the votes of three ignorant canons a man may be made a prelate, but if all the saints in Paradise and all the men who are in the universe declared with one voice that Martin was a good scholar, it would not make him one if he remained ignorant."

Towards the end of the eighth chapter we have the famous story of the geese of Father Philip, told with an overwhelming sense of seriousness. There was a certain young hermit who was taken by his abbot to a city. They saw some women dancing, and the youth inquired what creatures these might be. The father replied that they were geese. On their return to the cloister the youth wept inconsolably. The father asked what was the matter. The boy replied: "I am in torment for those geese that I saw in town." Then all the brethren were convoked, and the danger of beholding a woman was urged upon their consideration, since this was the effect upon an innocent boy who had never seen one and had been brought up in a hermitage. This story, it will be remembered, is told by Boccaccio in the opening of the fourth day of the "Decamerone." It was, later, imitated by La. Fontaine. Nor was it original with Boccaccio, for the tale is told in the "Cento Novelle Antiche," and also by Odo de Ceringtonia, who wrote in Latin, but is believed to have been an English Franciscan. It is still older, for it is to be

found in the religious romance of Josaphat and Barlaam, the curious book in which St. John of Damascus has turned Buddha into a Christian saint.¹ There are several Eastern variations of the story. This same horror of womankind appears in the anecdote of St. Arsenius, of whom we are told that when a widow travelled from a far country, and throwing herself at his feet weeping, said: "Pray to God for me," he answered: "I will pray to God that He will remove from my mind the remembrance of thee," and turned from her. This was not exactly the form of words that we should expect a gentleman to use to a lady; even Tony Weller, suspicious as he was of "widders," would have been more polite. But it may be said of Arsenius that his bark was worse than his bite, for we learn from another source that the lady, who was very much upset by his words, was consoled by the explanation given by Archbishop Theophilus, who said: "Knowest thou not that thou art a woman, and the fiend overcometh holy men oftentimes by women, and therefore the old man said to thee those words; howbeit he prayed always for thy soul." Still I think this aged gentlewoman had good reason to be in Caxton's phrase "much angry."

Lest cause should be given to others to be "much angry" also, this note must come to an end. The author of the "*Liber de Oculo Morali*" was a lover of literature. He realised that literature should have relation to life. According to his lights he stood for truth and righteousness. Let us cherish a kindly thought for Peter of Limoges as we return his book to its place in the library, to its place in the ranks of the great unread.

1. Dunlop's "History of Fiction," ii. 89.

AN INVOCATION TO BEAUTY.

By LAURENCE CLAY.

So oft my soul would see
Beauty's self, to know, but aye she hides,
Eludes my sight or but one moment bides,
Or on the pinions of her thought she rides,
Where my thought may not flee.

Perhaps the shades of night
Cloud the crystal which I fain would see
Visions divine reveal, that yet may be
In some deep moment of humility
Vouchsaf'd my gladsome sight.

Of joy and life, the dew!
Beauty supreme, of love th' incarnate light!
Whom all the flow'rs of field and sky bedight,
Suffuse thou all my heart and claim thy right
To worship pure and true.

Thou reign'st supreme o'er all!
The earth, the heavens, the soul, thou dost endue
With thine own essence rare, but hidst the clue
To what thou art, or thought, or shape, or hue,
And at whose feet we fall!

Spirit, all pure, divine,
Inform thou me, that once incarnate, all
Beauty thence may grow within, and call
Thee to my heart full oft, so thou enthrall
This waiting soul of mine.

Some fragrance give to me,
Some joy from out that inmost soul of thine
That fillest all that's best of worth in mine,
The beautiful and true in me refine
Till all grows like to thee!

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